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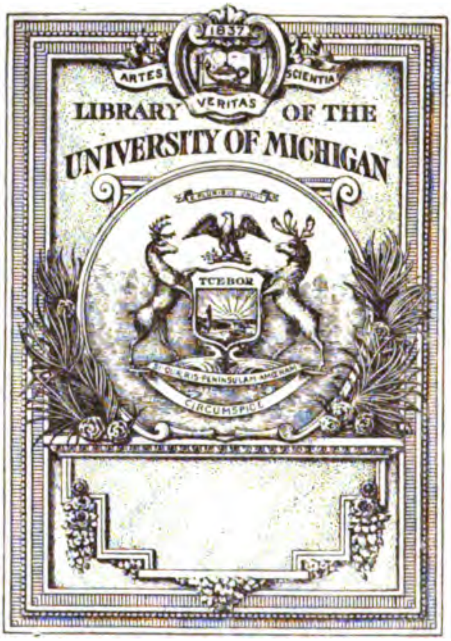

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THE

MONTHLY PACKET

OF

EVENING READINGS

FOR

Members of the English Church.

EDITED BY CHARLOTTE M. YONGE,

AUTHOR OF 'THE HEIR OF REDCLYFFE.'

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The Monthly Packet.

JANUARY, 1890.

THE HOUSE MARTIN'S TALE.

BY W. WARDE FOWLER.

LITTLE Miss Gwenny was sitting alone in the garden, one warm afternoon in September, taking her tea. Her comfortable little garden chair was placed under the projecting eaves on the shady side of the parsonage; the unclipped jessamine that climbed up the wall was clustering around her, and a soft breeze was stirring its long shoots, and gently lifting the little girl's locks with the same breath. She looked the picture of comfort and enjoyment.

On the little table by her side were the tea-tray, and a well-worn copy of 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.' She was not reading, however, though now and then she turned over the pages and looked at a picture. Except when she did so, she kept her eyes half-closed, and leaning back in her chair, gazed sleepily into the garden through her drooping eyelashes. The fact was, that she was every minute expecting to see a white rabbit come scudding up the lawn.

If only that white rabbit would appear, she knew that it would be all right. What other wonderful things might happen, she could not guess, and to say the truth, she was a little anxious about them. But that *something* wonderful would happen, so soon as the rabbit should be kind enough to come for her, she had no doubt at all. Twice before during that summer she had contrived to have the garden to herself, without fear of interruption from parents, brothers, servants or visitors; but the rabbit had never come, and this would very likely be her last chance before cold and rain set in.

Now in spite of her tea and her book, and her beloved solitude, Miss Gwenny was not at this moment in quite such a happy frame of mind as to deserve being called upon by a white rabbit. Several little things had happened to vex her; and when one is vexed, it is impossible to expect that either white rabbits, or Cheshire cats, or mock turtles, or gryphons, will wait upon one at pleasure and tell their tales, much less such very particular personages as hatters or March hares. It was true that her brothers were well out of the way at a cricket match, and that her father and mother had just set out on a long drive, taking with them the man-servant, who was always spoiling her plans by poking about in the garden with his tools. But this same man had done her a mortal injury by locking up the tool-house before he went away, and it was just this very tool-house on which she had been setting her heart the whole morning. There she could not possibly be seen either from the road or from the windows, while she could herself see quite enough of the garden to catch sight of the rabbit if he came; and there too, she had some property of her own in a dark corner, consisting of a dormouse, the gift of her brothers, and sundry valuable odds and ends, with which she might amuse herself if the rabbit did *not* come.

And this was not the only thing that troubled her. She had heard her mother say that she was going to ask Aunt Charlotte to look in and see after Gwenny; and Gwenny did not want, I grieve to say, to be seen after by Aunt Charlotte: for that kind lady was quite sure to stay a long time in the garden fidgeting with the rose-trees, and collecting snails and caterpillars in an old tin pan. These creatures she always carefully killed, to the great delight of the boys, by pouring boiling water on them, and she had more than once sent Gwenny to fetch a kettle from the kitchen for the purpose. Gwenny secretly determined to spill it, if such were her lot this afternoon; for how, she thought, can there be fairyland in our garden if all the animals are killed? So every moment, while she waited for the rabbit, she was expecting to hear the latch of the gate lifted and the quick decided step of her aunt coming up the gravel path.

Lastly, she knew that she had lost her brother Tom's cricket-ball in the paddock that morning, and that he had vowed vengeance on her if she had not found it by the time he came home. She ought to be looking for the ball instead of waiting for the white rabbit. And all this made her feel rather cross, in spite of her good luck in being left alone.

Several times, as she sat there, a quick shadow had passed over the white page of her book, but she did not notice it, nor did she heed a continuous quiet chatter that was going on over her head. At last, just as she happened to turn to the page on which is the picture of the duchess carrying the pig-baby, the shadow hovered for a moment and darkened the leaf, so that she looked up with a little frown.

'Everything teases me this afternoon!' she said. But the House Martin, whose shadow had disturbed her, had flown into his nest with food for his young ones. Gwenny watched for his coming out again, and listened to the chattering that was going on in the nest. Presently he came out, and then she watched for his return; and soon, so constant was the hovering and chattering, the gardener, and Aunt Charlotte, and Tom, and even the white rabbit himself, were all forgotten, and she began, after her own odd fashion, to talk to the Martins in a dreamy way—

'What busy people you are,' she said, very softly, so as not to disturb them; 'how tired you must get, fussing about like that all day long. Fancy if my mother had to run round the garden a dozen times before giving me anything to eat! That would be more in Aunt Charlotte's way, wouldn't it? (I *won't* get the boiling water to-day—or at least I'll spill it.) I dare say you're very happy—anyhow it's lucky for you that you can't be caught, and have boiling water poured on you. She'd do it if she could, though. Yes, you are certainly very happy—you don't come back to your nest and find it locked up like *my* tool-house. How you do skim about, like fish swimming in the air! And how nice and clean you are—though I did see you grubbing in the mud on the road the other day. I should like to be you, instead of *Me*, with all sorts of things to worry me!'

At this moment a Martin stopped to rest for a moment on a projecting dead bough of the elm-tree which grew close to the house and almost touched it; and at once fell to ruffling up its feathers, and scratched and pecked at them with great energy.

'What are you doing that for?' said Gwenny, watching in a lazy way, with her eyes half-closed.

The Martin seemed to take no notice, but clinging to his twig with some difficulty, against the rising breeze (for his feet were not made for perching), he went on diligently searching his feathers with his bill.

'What are you doing that for?' said Gwenny again in a voice still sleepier. And in fact her head began to nod, and she gently fell asleep.

At the same moment, if you had been there, you might have seen the long ears of a white rabbit poked out of a lilac-bush in the shrubbery. He looked hard at Gwenny for a moment, then ran hastily up to her, and smelt her gently with his round furry nose.

'Well,' said the Martin from his bough, 'is it all right?'

The rabbit sniffed again, laid his ears back, and seemed satisfied. But he was evidently in a hurry, and was off to the lilac-bush in a moment without a word.

'Dear little Gwenny,' said the Martin, after a pause. 'So you have your troubles too; I've known you every summer since you were born, and I should have thought you were the happiest little girl in the world!'

Gwenny's head was gently shaken. She understood, though you would have said she was fast asleep.

'And you think a House-martin has no troubles? Why, dear me, to think only of these ticks! There are half-a-dozen in every feather, I truly believe, and if you had to count my feathers it would be your bedtime long before you got half through them. I could sit here by the hour together, hunting for them, if I hadn't plenty of other work to do. You can't think how they fidget one, tickling and creeping all day long! And the nest up there is swarming with them! Have you got ticks under your feathers, I wonder?'

'Don't talk of such horrid things,' said Gwenny. 'Of course I haven't. Please don't fly down; you might drop some about. I had no idea you were such nasty creatures!'

'Speak gently, please,' returned the Martin. 'It's not our fault. They *will* come, and there's not a Martin in the whole world that hasn't got them. You see we are much to be pitied. And you are a very lucky little girl. You have no ticks, and no long journeys to make, and no droughts to get through, and no sparrows to bully you, and no men or cats to catch and kill you. Dear me,' added he with a sigh, 'such a spring and summer as my wife and I have had! Troubles on troubles, worries on worries—and depend on it, we haven't seen the end of it yet! But it's no good talking about it. When one is worried the best thing is to be as busy as possible. So I had better say good-bye and get to work again.' And he fluttered off his perch.

'O please don't go,' cried Gwenny. 'Stay a little longer and tell me all about it. I'm sure it'll do you good. I always go and tell someone when I get into trouble. Please tell me all your worries, and I'll promise never to call you happy again; nor clean either,' she added, 'as you are certainly *not* clean.'

The Martin perched once more on his twig. 'Well,' he said, 'I will tell you my story, as the rabbit thought you smelt all right, but——'

'What rabbit?' said Gwenny.

'The white rabbit,' answered the Martin. 'He came in and sniffed at you, just as you fell asleep.'

'Then it's fairyland at last' said Gwenny, with a sigh of relief. 'I thought it would come. Go on, please, dear Martin. This is quite delicious. I don't mind how long it lasts, only I must hear it all. Go on, please go on.'

And the Martin began, while the little head drooped and nodded, and the breeze blew the brown locks all about the hidden face.

'The wonder is,' he said, 'that I am here at all. Every year it seems more astonishing, considering that half the martins that nested in the village in my first summer are dead and gone. And indeed our numbers are less than they used to be; we have to face so many perils and troubles. When we left Africa this summer——'

'But why do you leave it?' asked Gwenny. 'If you were once safe there, why did you come back?'

The Martin paused for a moment. 'I really don't quite know,' he presently said; 'I never thought about it; we always do come here, and our ancestors always came; so I suppose we shall go on with it. Besides, this is really our *home.* We were born here, you see, and when the heat begins in Africa, there comes a strange feeling in our hearts, a terrible home-sickness, and we *must* go.'

'Then when you are once here, why do you go away back to Africa?' asked Gwenny.

'My dear,' said the Martin, 'if you will listen and not ask so many questions, you will perhaps find out why that is. Let me begin again. When we left Africa this year, we went our usual way by the big islands which you call Sardinia and Corsica—where we can rest, you know, and stay a day or two to recruit ourselves—and then we made another sea passage, and came to land in the South of France, near the big town of Marseilles. Of course we are not afraid of towns or men; we have always found men very kind in not worrying us, and their houses very convenient for nesting in. Long ago we used to nest in rocks, and so we do now in some places; but when you began to build houses of stone, we took to them very soon, for then there was plenty of room for all of us, and no one to persecute us either, as the hawks used to do in the rocky hills. But really I fancy sometimes that we shall have to give it up again one of these days.'

'Why?' said Gwenny. 'I hope you won't think of such a thing, now we're friends. Besides there are no rocks near here, and you'd have to go away altogether.'

'Well, well,' said the Martin, 'we're only just beginning to think about it. It won't come in my time. But if you want to know why, you must wait a little, till I get on with my story. When we get to the French coast, we always rest on anything we can find, such as telegraph wires, chimneys, towers; and of course as we come in thousands, and much about the same time, the people look out for us and welcome us. Now what could have possessed them this year, I can't guess, and I dare say it was only a few wicked ones who did it; but almost every one of these towers and wires was smeared with some dreadful sticky stuff which held us fast, till rough men came and seized us. Hundreds and hundreds of us were caught in this way, and never will see their old homes again.'

'Shameful,' cried Gwenny. 'I believe I know what that was for. I heard mother reading about it out of the newspaper. Something to do with ladies' trimmings and the Paris Exhibition. But how did *you* escape?'

'Only by a miracle,' said the bird. 'And indeed I do wonder I'm safe here; I alighted on a tall iron fence near the sea, and instantly I felt my claws fastened to the iron; not one bit would they move. A few yards off were two or three other birds in just the same plight; and after a time of useless struggling, I saw to my horror a man come along, with a boy carrying a big bag. As the fence was high, he had a pair of steps on his shoulder, and when he came to the other birds, he put down these and mounted them. Then he seized the birds, gave their necks a twist, and dropped them into the bag, which the boy held open below. It was sickening; I could see one or two which he had not quite killed, struggling about at the bottom of the bag. Poor things, poor things! And there was I, just as much at the mercy of these ruffians, and my turn was to come next.'

'Oh, this is too horrible,' said Gwenny. 'I really can't bear to hear it, and I wonder you can bear to tell it.'

'Ah, my dear, we have to get hardened to these things. And it's good for you to hear my story, as you thought our lives were all happiness. Well, the man came along to me with his steps, and I struggled, and he chuckled, and in another moment it would have been all over. But just as he was about to grip me, he noticed that his boy was not below with the bag, and turning round he saw him a little way off in the road practising standing on his head, while the bag was lying in the dust with its mouth wide open. He shouted angrily, called the boy names, and bade him bring the bag directly; and when he came, gave him a kick in the back which made him squeal. Then he turned round again, seized me with a rough, dirty hand, and wrenched my claws loose. Oh the dreadful misery of that moment! But it was only a moment. At the very instant when he got me loose, the steps were pulled from beneath him, and as he struggled to save himself, he let go his hold of me. Away I went as fast as I could fly, only looking back for a moment to see the man struggling on his face in the dust, and the boy running away with all his might. I owe my life to that urchin's mischief. He served his master out well, and I hope he didn't get beaten for it afterwards.'

'Perhaps you'll see him again, when you go back,' said Gwenny; 'and then you can thank him, you know. Only I suppose he can only talk French.'

'If I could find him napping in a garden, as you are now, that wouldn't so much matter,' said the Martin; 'we understand all the languages people talk when they're asleep—if they are the right kind of people, of course.'

'I'm not asleep!' cried Gwenny, indignantly. 'What made you think I'm asleep? I'm listening as hard as ever I can. Please go on.'

'Well,' continued the Martin, 'I flew off, as I said, and it was a long time before I rested again. I was afraid that sticky stuff would hold me fast again, and I dipped into the rivers and scraped myself in the dusty roads, till I felt I had pretty well got rid of it. And no other misadventure happened while we were in France; and then there came a pleasant morning with bright sun and gentle breeze, in which we crossed the sea to this dear island-home of yours and ours, where no one wants to catch and kill us; and then we felt as happy as you fancy we always are. It was in mid-April, and your fields did look so green!—we had not seen such green for almost a whole year; the sun shone into the grass and lit it up, and forced the celandines and marigolds to open their blossoms all along the valley, as we made our way to our old home here. Every now and then a delicious shower would come sweeping down from the west, and the labouring men would get under a tree, and throw old sacks over their shoulders to keep them dry; and the gentle-folk out walking in the roads would put up their umbrellas and run for it. But we—ah! how we did enjoy those showers after the heats and droughts of our long journey! We coursed about and chattered to each other, and greeted our friends the sand-martins by the river-bank, knowing that the sun would be out again in a few minutes, and would bring all sorts of juicy insects out of the moistened grass. And when the rain had passed, and the blue sky above was all the bluer for the dark cloud in the distance, where the rainbow was gathering its brightness, what delicious feasts we had; how we did career about, and chatter, and enjoy ourselves!'

'I dare say you did,' said Gwenny. 'And I'm very glad you're happy sometimes; but I hope there's something dreadful coming yet—it's so much more interesting, you know, though of course I don't like it.'

'Only too soon there came something dreadful,' the Martin went on—'dreadful to *us*, at least. The very next day (that was the day we arrived here), the soft west wind dropped, and no more showers came. Quite early in the morning I felt a difference: I felt a dryness about the skin, and a tickling at the roots of my feathers, which I knew was not caused by those little creepers I told you of. And when I rested on the telegraph wires to scratch myself a little with my bill, I got so cold that I had to leave off and take to flight again. And then I knew that the wind was in the *East*, and that I should get very little good by flying, though fly I must, for the insects would not rise. Those of yesterday were dead already, nipped with a single night's frost, and there was no sun to bring fresh ones to life. But we managed to get on fairly that day, and hoped that the east wind would be gone the next morning.'

'Why, what a difference the wind does make to some people,' put in Gwenny. 'You're just like Aunt Charlotte; whenever she's sharper than usual, my mother says it's the east wind, and so it is, I believe; it dries up the snails, and they go under the bushes, so that she can't find them. That's the only way I can tell an east wind; the snails go in, and Aunt Charlotte gets put out.'

'Then Aunt Charlotte must have been *very* cross last spring,' said the Martin; 'and so were we, and very wretched too. It lasted quite three weeks, and how we contrived to get through it, I hardly know. Some of us died—the weaker ones—when it turned to sleeting and freezing; and when the swifts came early in May, they had a dreadful time of it, poor creatures, for they are very delicate and helpless, in spite of their long wings. There were no flies to be had, except in one or two places, and there we all used to go, and especially to that long strip of stagnant water which the railway-embankment shelters from the east. We used to fly up and down, up and down, over that dreary bit of water; but to collect a good beakful of flies used to take us so long that we had often to rest on the railway before it was done, and we got so cold and so tired that we could only fly slowly, and often felt as if we should have to give in altogether.'

'I saw you,' said Gwenny; 'I watched you ever so long one day, and I was quite pleased because I could see the white patches on your tails so nicely; you flew so slowly, and often you came along almost under my feet.'

'And I saw you,' returned the Martin, 'one day, but only one; for you caught your bad cold that very day while you were watching, and the next time I saw you, when I peeped in at the window as I was looking for my old nest, you were in bed, and I could hear you sneezing and coughing even through the window-panes. It was a bad time for all of us, my dear.'

'Well, I don't know,' said Gwenny. 'I like being ill in bed rather, especially in an east wind, because then Aunt Charlotte stops at home, and can't——'

'Never mind Aunt Charlotte,' said the Martin. 'She'll be here directly, and you mustn't say unkind things of her. I can feel with her, poor thing, if she lives on snails, and can't catch them in an east wind.'

Gwenny was about to explain, but the Martin said, 'Hush,' and went on with his tale; for he was aware that it was getting rather long, and that Aunt Charlotte might be expected at any moment.

'At last the east wind went, and then for awhile we had a better time. Rain fell, and the roads became muddy, and we set to work to rebuild our nest. For you must know that it was one of our bits of bad luck this year, that our dear old nest had been quite destroyed when we returned, and instead of creeping into it to roost during that terrible east wind, as we like to do, we had to find some other hole or corner to shelter us. You see your home is our home too; and how would you like to have to go and sleep in the tool-house, or under the gooseberry bushes in the kitchen-garden?'

'I should love to sleep in the tool-house,' said Gwenny, 'at least if I could have my bed in there. But I never knew you slept in your old nests, nor did father, I'm sure, or he would have taken care of them when the workmen were here painting the window-frames and the timbers under the roof.'

'I thought that was how it was done,' said the Martin. 'They like to make everything spick and span, and of course our nests look untidy. Well, it can't be helped; but it was bad luck for us—we went to work, gathered up the mud in our bills, and laid the foundation afresh, mixing it with a little grass or straw to keep it firm.'

'Like the Israelites when they had to make bricks!' said Gwenny.

'Just so,' said the Martin; for though the Israelites were a little beyond him, it would not do to show ignorance. 'And all was going on nicely, and my wife up there was quite in a hurry to lay her eggs, and we were working like bees, when out came the sun, and shone, without a cloud to hide him day after day, and all the moisture dried up in the roads, and our foundations cracked and crumbled, because we could get no fresh mud to finish the work with. We made long journeys to the pond in the next village, and to the river-bank, but it was all no good; the mud dried in our very mouths at first, and afterwards there was nothing soft even on the edge of pond or river—nothing but hard-baked clay, split into great slits by the heat.'

'Why, we could have watered the road for you,' cried Gwenny, 'if we had only known!'

'Yes, my dear, to be sure; but then you never do know, you see. We know a good deal about you, living as we do on your houses; we know when you get up, and when you go to bed, and when you are naughty, and a great deal more you'd never expect; but you know very little about us, or I shouldn't have to be telling you all this long story. Of course, you *might* know, if you thought it worth while; but very few of you take an interest in us, and I'm sure I don't wonder.'

'Why don't you wonder?' asked Gwenny.

'Because we aren't good to eat,' said the Martin. 'Don't argue please; I know it is so, and I must get on. Well, we waited patiently, though we were very sad, and at last came the rain and we finished the nest. And then we had a really happy time, though we little knew what was coming. An egg was laid, and my wife nestled on it, and I caught flies and fed her, and at night nestled with her under the shelter of your comfortable eaves; and soon another egg was laid, and then—then came the worst of all.'

The Martin paused, and seemed hardly able to go on, and Gwenny was silent, out of respect for his feelings. At last he resumed.

'One afternoon, after the morning's feeding was over, I flew off, so joyful did I feel, and coursed up and down with some friends over meadow and river in the sunshine, till the lengthening shadows warned me that my wife would be getting hungry again. I sped home at my quickest pace, and flew straight to the nest. If I had not been in such a hurry I might have noticed a long straw sticking out of it, and then I should have been prepared for what was coming; but I was taken by surprise, and I never shall forget that moment. I clung as usual to the nest, and put my head in before entering. It was a piteous sight I saw! My wife was not there; the eggs were gone; and a half-a-dozen coarse white feathers from the poultry yard told me what had happened. Before I could steady my reeling brain, I heard a loud fierce chatter behind me, felt a punch from a powerful bill in my back, which knocked me clean off the nest, and as I flew screaming away, I saw a great coarse dirty sparrow, with a long straw in his ugly beak, go into the nest just as if it were his own property. And indeed it was his own property, by right of wicked force and selfish idleness; for as long as I continued to hover round, he sat there in the entrance, with his big grey head and his black chin thrust out, and his cruel eyes watching me with triumph; and I knew it was all no use my trying to get in, for if I had I should never have come out alive. Look at my bill! it's not meant to fight with. We don't wish to fight with any one: we do no one any harm. Why should we be bullied and persecuted by these fat vulgar creatures? You could prevent it if you liked, but you take no notice, and you think us always happy. Now do you think I have enjoyed myself this summer?'

'Don't, please,' sobbed Gwenny, whose tears were fast running down her cheeks; 'it sha'n't happen again, indeed it sha'n't—I'll tell father, and I know he'll protect you. We'll do all we can if you'll only come again and have a better summer next year—I'll promise, if you'll promise.'

'Dear child, I didn't mean to make you cry,' said the Martin. 'It's all right now, so dry your eyes. We built another nest, and there it is over your head. But it's very late in the season, and if the cold sets in early, my little ones up there may have hard work to keep alive. In any case they will be late on their journey south, and may meet with many trials and hardships. But we must hope for the best, and if you'll do your best to keep your promise, I'll do my best to keep mine. Now we are friends, and must try not to forget each other. As I said, this is your home and it's mine too. Often and often have I thought of it when far away in other lands. This year I thought I should not have one pleasant recollection to carry with me to the south; but thanks to the white rabbit——'

'And to Mr. Lewis Carroll,' put in Gwenny.

'I shall have you to think of, and your promise! and I will come back again in April, if all is well, and shall hope to see you all again, you and the rabbit, and your father and mother, and Aunt Charlotte and the sn——'

'Gwenny, Gwenny!' said a well-known voice; 'my dear child, fast asleep out-of-doors, and evening coming on! It's getting cold, and you'll have another chill, as sure as I'm alive. Run to the kitchen, dear, and make the kettle boil, and you can get warm before the fire.'

'I'm not cold,' said Gwenny, stretching herself and getting up; 'and please, Aunt Charlotte, no boiling water to-day! It's fairy-land in the garden to-day, and I really can't have the creatures killed; I can't indeed.'

'Can't what?' said Aunt Charlotte, lifting the pan in one hand and her garden-scissors in the other for sheer amazement. 'Well, what are we coming to next, I wonder! Fairyland! Is the child bewitched?'

But at that moment the Martin, who had left his perch, flew so close to Aunt Charlotte's ear that she turned round startled; and catching sight of the carriage coming down the lane, ran to open the garden gate, and welcome Gwenny's father and mother.

Gwenny looked up at the Martin's nest, and nodded her thanks; then she too ran to the gate, and seizing on her father with both hands, danced round him down the garden, and told him she had made a promise, which he must help her to keep. It was a good half-hour before they came in together (Gwenny with the lost cricket-ball in her hand), looking as if they had been greatly enjoying themselves. Aunt Charlotte had gone home again, and the snails were left in peace. And as the Martin flew out of his nest, and saw Gwenny and her father watching him, he knew that the promise would be kept.

TWO PENNILESS PRINCESSES.

CHAPTER I.

DUNBAR.

'"Twas on a night, an evening bright
  When the dew began to fa',
Lady Margaret was walking up and down,
  Looking over her castle wa'.'

THE battlements of a castle were, in disturbed times, the only recreation-ground of the ladies and play-place of the young people. Dunbar Castle, standing on steep rocks above the North Sea, was not only inaccessible on that side, but from its donjon tower commanded a magnificent view, both of the expanse of waves, taking purple tints from the shadows of the clouds, with here and there a sail fleeting before the wind, and of the rugged headlands of the coast, point beyond point, the nearer distinct, and showing the green summits, and below, the tossing waves breaking white against the dark rocks, and the distance becoming more and more hazy, in spite of the bright sun which made a broken path of glory along the tossing, white-crested waters.

The wind was a keen north-east breeze, and might have been thought too severe by any but the 'hardy, bold and wild' children who were merrily playing on the top of the donjon tower round the staff whence fluttered the double tressured banner with 'the ruddy lion ramped in gold' denoting the presence of the King.

Three little boys, almost babies, and a little girl not much older, were presided over by a small elder sister who held the youngest in her lap, and tried to amuse him with caresses and rhymes, so as to prevent his interference with the castle-building of the others, with their small hoard of pebbles and mussel and cockle-shells.

Another maiden, the wind tossing her long chestnut-locks, uncovered, but tied with the Scottish snood, sat on the battlement, gazing far out over the waters with eyes of the same tint as the hair. Even the sea-breeze failed to give more than a slight touch of colour to her somewhat freckled complexion; and the limbs that rested in a careless attitude on the stone bench were long and languid, though with age and favourable circumstances there might be a development of beauty and dignity. Her lips were crooning at intervals a mournful old Scottish tune, sometimes only humming, sometimes uttering its melancholy burthen, and she now and then touched a small harp that stood by her side on the seat.

She did not turn round when a step approached, till a hand was laid on her shoulder, when she started, and looked up into the face of another girl, on a smaller scale, with a complexion of the lily-and-rose kind, fair hair under her hood, with a hawk upon her wrist, and blue eyes dancing at the surprise of her sister.

'Eleanor in a creel, as usual!' she cried.

'I thought it was only one of the bairns,' was the answer.

'They might coup over the walls for aught thou seest,' returned the new-comer. 'If it were not for little Mary what would become of the poor weans?'

'What will become of any of us?' said Eleanor. 'I was gazing out over the sea and wishing we could drift away upon it to some land of rest.'

'The Glenuskie folk are going to try another land,' said Jean. 'I was in the baily-court even now playing at ball with Jamie when in comes a lay-brother, with a letter from Sir Patrick to say that he is coming the night to crave permission from Jamie to go with his wife to France. Annis, as you know, is betrothed to the son of his French friends, Malcolm is to study at the Paris University, and Davie to be in the Scottish Guards to learn chivalry like his father. And the Leddy of Glenuskie—our Cousin Lilian—is going with them.'

'And she will see Margaret,' said Eleanor. 'Meg the dearie! Dost remember Meg, Jeanie?'

'Well, well do I remember her, and how she used to let us nestle in her lap and sing to us. She sang like thee, Eleen, and was as motherlike as Mary is to the weans, but she was much blithesome—at least before our father was slain.'

'Sweetest Meg! My whole heart leaps after her,' cried Eleanor, with a fervent gesture.

'I loved her better than Isabel, though she was not so bonnie,' said Jean.

'Jeanie, Jeanie,' cried Eleanor, turning round with a vehemence strangely contrasting with her previous language, 'wherefore should we not go with Glenuskie to be with Meg at Bourges?'

Jeanie opened her blue eyes wide.

'Go to the French King's Court?' she said.

'To the land of chivalry and song,' exclaimed Eleanor, 'where they have courts of love and poetry, and tilts and tourneys and minstrelsy, and the sun shines as it never does in this cold bleak north; and above all there is Margaret, dear tender Margaret, almost a queen, as a queen she will be one day. Oh! I almost feel her embrace.'

'It might be well,' said Jean, in the matter-of-fact tone of a practical young lady; 'mewed up in these dismal castles we shall never get princely husbands like our sisters. I might be Queen of Beauty; I doubt me whether you are fair enough, Eleanor.'

'Oh, that is not what I think of,' said Eleanor. 'It is to see our own Margaret, and to see and hear the minstrel knights, instead of the rude savages here, scarce one of whom knows what knighthood means!'

'Ay, and they will lay hands on us and wed us one of these days,' returned Jean, 'unless we vow ourselves as nuns, and I have no mind for that.'

'Nor would a convent always guard us,' said Eleanor; 'these reivers do not stick at sanctuary. Now in that happy land ladies meet with courtesy, and there is a minstrel king like our father, René is his name, uncle to Margaret's husband. Oh! it would be a very paradise.'

'Let us go, let us go!' exclaimed Jean.

'Go!' said Mary, who had drawn nearer to them while they spoke. 'Whither did ye say?'

'To France—to Sister Margaret and peace and sunshine,' said Eleanor.

'Eh!' said the girl, a pale fair child of twelve; 'and what would poor Jamie and the weans do, wanting their titties?'

'Ye are but a bairn, Mary,' was Jean's answer. 'We shall do better for Jamie by wedding some great lords in the far countrie than by waiting here at home.'

'And James will soon have a queen of his own to guide him,' added Eleanor.

'I'll no quit Jamie or the weans,' said little Mary, resolutely, turning back as the three-year-old boy elicited a squall from the eighteen-months one.

'Johnnie! Johnnie! what gars ye tak' away wee Andie's claw? Here, my mannie.'

And she was kneeling on the leads, making peace over the precious crab's claw, which, with a few cockles and mussels, were the choicest toys of these forlorn young Stewarts; for Stewarts they all were, though the three youngest, the weans, as they were called, were only half-brothers to the rest.

Nothing, in point of fact, could have been much more forlorn than the condition of all. The father of the elder ones, James I., the flower of the whole Stewart race, had nine years before fallen a victim to the savage revenge and ferocity of the lawless men whom he had vainly endeavoured to restrain, leaving an only son of six years old and six young daughters. His wife, Joanna, once the Nightingale of Windsor, had wreaked vengeance in so barbarous a manner as to increase the dislike to her as an Englishwoman. Forlorn and in danger, she tried to secure a protector by a marriage with Sir James Stewart, called the Black Knight of Lorn; but he was unable to do much for her, and only added the feuds of his own family to increase the general danger. The two eldest daughters, Margaret and Isabel, were already contracted to the Dauphin and the Duke of Brittany and were soon sent to their new homes. The little King, the one darling of his mother, was snatched from her, and violently transferred from one fierce guardian to another; each regarding the possession of his person as a sanction to tyranny. He had been introduced to the two winsome young Douglases only as a prelude to their murder, and every day brought tidings of some fresh violence; nay, for the second time, a murder was perpetrated in the Queen's own chamber.

The poor woman had never been very tender or affectionate, and had the haughty demeanour with which the house of Somerset had thought fit to assert their claims to royalty. The cruel slaughter of her first husband, perhaps the only person for whom she had ever felt a softening love, had hardened and soured her. She despised and domineered over her second husband, and made no secret that the number of her daughters was oppressive, and that it was hard that while the royal branch had produced, with one exception, only useless pining maidens, her second marriage in too quick succession should bring her sons, who could only be a burthen. No one greatly marvelled when, a few weeks after the birth of little Andrew, his father disappeared, though whether he had perished in some brawl, been lost at sea, or sought foreign service as far as possible from his queenly wife and inconvenient family, no one knew.

Not long after, the Queen, with her four daughters and the infants, had been seized upon by a noted freebooter, Patrick Hepburn of Hailes, and carried to Dunbar Castle, probably to serve as hostages, for they were fairly well treated, though never allowed to go beyond the walls. The Queen's health had, however, been greatly shaken, the cold blasts of the north wind withered her up, and she died in the beginning of the year 1445.

The desolateness of the poor girls had, perhaps, been greater than their grief. Poor Joanna had been exacting and tyrannical, and with no females or attendants but the old, worn-out English nurse, had made them do her all sorts of services, which were requited with scoldings and grumblings instead of the loving thanks which ought to have made them offices of affection as well as duty; while the poor little boys would indeed have fared ill if their half-sister, Mary, though only twelve years old, had not been one of those girls who are endowed from the first with tender, motherly instincts.

Beyond providing that there was a supply of some sort of food, and that they were confined within the walls of the Castle, Hepburn did not trouble his head about his prisoners, and for many weeks they had no intercourse with any one save Archie Scott, an old groom of their mother; Ankaret, nurse to baby Andrew; and the seneschal and his wife, both Hepburns.

Eleanor and Jean, who had been eight and seven years old at the time of the terrible catastrophe which had changed all their lives, had been well taught under their father's influence; and the former, who had inherited much of his talent and poetical nature, had availed herself of every scanty opportunity of feeding her imagination by book or ballad, story-teller or minstrel; and the store of tales, songs and fancies that she had accumulated were not only her own chief resource but that of her sisters, in the many long and dreary hours that they had to pass, unbrightened save by the inextinguishable buoyancy of young creatures together. When their mother was dying, Hepburn could not help for very shame admitting a priest to her bedside, and allowing the clergy to perform her obsequies in full form. This had led to a more complete perception of the condition of the poor Princesses, just at the time when the two worst tyrants over the young King, Crichton and Livingstone, had fallen out, and he had been able to put himself under the guidance of his first cousin, James Kennedy, Bishop of St. Andrews and now Chancellor of Scotland, one of the wisest, best and truest-hearted men in Scotland, and imbued with the spirit of the late King.

By his management, Hepburn was induced to make submission and deliver up Dunbar Castle to the King with all its captives, and the meeting between the brother and sisters was full of extreme delight on both sides. They had been together very little since their father's death, only meeting enough to make them long for more opportunities; and the boy at fifteen years old was beginning to weary after the home feeling of rest among kindred, and was so happy amidst his sisters that no attempt at breaking up the party at Dunbar had yet been made, as its situation made it a convenient abode for the Court. Though he had never had such advantages of education as, strangely enough, captivity had afforded to his father, he had not been untaught, and his rapid, eager, intelligent mind had caught at all opportunities afforded by those palace monasteries of Scotland in which he had stayed for various periods of his vexed and stormy minority. Good Bishop Kennedy, with whom he had now spent many months, had studied at Paris and had passed four years at Rome, so as to be well able both to enlarge and stimulate his notions. In Eleanor, he had found a companion delighted to share his studies, and full likewise of original fancy and of that vein of poetry almost peculiar to Scottish women; and Jean was equally charming for all the sports in which she could take part, while the little ones, whom, to his credit be it spoken, he always treated as brothers, were pleasant playthings.

His presence, with all that it involved, had made a most happy change in the maidens' lives; and yet there was still great dreariness, much restraint in the presence of constant precaution against violence, much rudeness and barbarism in the surroundings, absolute poverty in the plenishing, a lack of all beauty save in the wild and rugged face of northern nature, and it was hardly to be wondered at that young people, inheritors of the cultivated instincts of James I. and of the Plantagenets, should yearn for something beyond, especially for that sunny southern land which report and youthful imagination made them believe an ideal world of peace, of poetry and of chivalry, and the loving elder sister who seemed to them a part of that golden age when their noble and tender-hearted father was among them.

The boy's foot was on the turret-stairs, and he was out on the battlements—a tall lad for his age, of the same colouring as Eleanor, and very handsome, except for the blemish of a dark red mark upon one cheek.

'How now, wee Andie?' he exclaimed, tossing the baby boy up in his arms, and then on the cry of 'Johnnie too!' 'Me too!' performing the same feat with the other two, the last so boisterously that Mary screamed that 'the bairnie would be coupit over the crag.'

'What, looking out over the sea?' he cried to his elder sisters. 'That's the wrang side! Ye should look out on the other, to see Glenuskie coming with Davie and Malcolm, so we'll have no lack of minstrelsy and tales to-night, that is if the doited old council will let me alone. Here, come to the southern tower to watch for them.'

The sisters had worked themselves to the point of eagerness where propitious moments are disregarded, and both broke out—

'Glenuskie is going to Margaret. We want to go with him!'

'Go! Go to Margaret and leave me!' cried James, the red spot on his face spreading.

'Oh, Jamie, it is so dull and dreary, and folks are so fierce and rude.'

'That might be when that loon Hepburn had you, but now you have me, who can take order with them.'

'You cannot do all, Jamie,' persisted Eleanor; 'and we long after that fair smooth land of peace. Lady Glenuskie would take good care of us till we came to Margaret.'

'Ay! And 'tis little you heed how it is with me,' exclaimed James, 'when you are gone to your daffing and singing and dancing—with me that have saved you from that reiver Hepburn.'

'Jamie dear, I'll never quit ye,' said little Mary's gentle voice.

He laughed.

'You are a leal faithful little lady, Mary; but you are no good as yet, when Angus is speiring for my sister for his heir.'

'And do you trow,' said Jean, hotly, 'that when one sister is to be a queen, and the other is next thing to it, we are going to put up with a raw-boned, red-haired, unmannerly Scots earl?'

'And do you forget who is King of Scotland, ye proud peat?' her brother cried in return.

'A braw sort of king,' returned Jean, 'who could not hinder his mother and sisters from being stolen by an outlaw.'

The pride and hot temper of the Beauforts had descended to both brother and sister, and James lifted his hand with 'Dare to say that again;' and Jean was beginning 'I dare,' when little Annaple opportunely called, 'There's a plump of spears coming over the hill.'

There was an instant rush to watch them, James saying—

'The Drummond banner! Ye shall see how Glenuskie mocks at this same fine fancy of yours;' and he ran down-stairs at no kingly pace, letting the heavy nail-studded door bang after him.

'He will never let us go,' sighed Jean.

'You worked him into one of his tempers,' returned Eleanor. 'You should have broached it to him more by degrees.'

'And lost the chance of going with Sir Patie and his wife, and got plighted to the red-haired Master of Angus—never see sweet Meg and her braw court, and the tilts and tourneys, but live among murderous caitiffs and reivers all my days,' sobbed Jean.

'I would not be such a fule body as to give in for a hasty word or two, specially of Jamie's,' said Eleanor, composedly.

'And gin ye bide here,' added gentle Mary, 'we shall be all together, and you will have Jamie and the bairnies.'

'Fine consolation,' muttered Jean.

'Eh well,' said Eleanor, 'we must go down and meet them.'

'This fashion!' exclaimed Jean. 'Look at your hair, Ellie—blown wild about your ears like a daft woman's, and your kirtle all over mortar and smut. My certie, you would be a bonnie lady to be Queen of Love and Beauty at a jousting-match.'

'You are no better, Jeanie,' responded Eleanor.

'That I ken full well, but I'd be shamed to show myself to knights and lairds that gate. And see Mary and all the lave have their hands as black as a caird's.'

'Come and let Andie's Mary wash them,' said that little personage, picking up fat Andrew in her arms, while he retained his beloved crab's claw. 'Jeanie, would you carry Johnnie, he's not sure-footed, over the stair? Annaple, take Lorn's hand over the kittle turning.'

One chamber was allotted to the entire party and their single nurse. Being far up in the tower, it ventured to have two windows in the massive walls, so thick that five-and-twenty steps from the floor were needed to reach the narrow slips of glass in a frame that could be removed at will, either to admit the air or to be exchanged for solid wooden shutters to exclude storms by sea or arrows and bolts by land. The lower part of the walls was hung with very grim old tapestry, on which Holofernes' head, going into its bag, could just be detected; there were two great solid box beds, two more pallets rolled up for the day, a chest or two, a rude table, a cross-legged chair, a few stools, and some deer and sealskins spread on the floor, completed the furniture of this ladies' bower. There was, unusual luxury, a chimney with a hearth and peat fire, and a cauldron on it, with a silver and a copper bason beside it for the washing purposes, never discarded by poor Queen Joanna and her old English nurse, Ankaret, who had remained beside her through all the troubles of the stormy and barbarous country, and, though crippled by a fall and racked with rheumatism, was the chief comfort of the young children. She crouched at the hearth with her spinning and her beads, and exclaimed at the tossed hair and soiled hands and faces of her charges.

Mary brought the little ones to her to be set to rights, and the elder girls did their best with their toilette. Princesses as they were, the ruddy golden tresses of Eleanor, and the flaxen locks of Jean and Mary, were the only ornaments that they could boast of as their own; and though there were silken and embroidered garments of their mother's in one of the chests, their mourning forbade the use of them. The girls only wore the plain black kirtles that had been brought from Haddington at the time of the funeral, and the little boys had such homespun garments as the shepherd lads wore.

Partly scolding, partly caressing, partly bemoaning the condition of her young ladies, so different from the splendours of the house of Somerset, Ankaret saw that Eleanor was as fit to be seen as circumstances would permit, for as to Jean and Mary there was no trouble on that score.

The whole was not accomplished till a horn was sounded as an intimation that supper was ready, at five o'clock for the entire household, and all made their way down—Jean first, in all the glory of her fair face and beautiful hair; then Eleanor with little Lorn, as he was called, his Christian name being James; then Annaple and Johnnie hand-in-hand, Mary carrying Andrew, and lastly old Ankaret, hobbling along with her stick, and, when out of sight, a hand on Annaple's shoulder. In public, nothing would have made her presume so far. The hall was a huge vaulted stone-walled room, with a great fire on the wide hearth, and three long tables—one was cross-wise, on the daïs near the fire, the other two ran the length of the hall. The upper one was furnished with tolerably clean napery and a few silver vessels; as to the lower ones, they were in two degrees of comparison, and the less said of the third the better. It was for the men-at-arms and the lowest servants, whereas the second belonged to those of the suite of the King and Chancellor, who were not of rank to be at his table. The Lord Lion King-at-arms was high-table company, but he was absent, and the inferior royal pursuivant was entertaining two of his fellows, one with the Douglas Bloody Heart, the other with the Lindsay Lion on a black field, besides two messengers of the different clans, who looked askance at one another.

Leaning against the wall near the window stood the young King with two or three youths beside him laughing and talking over three great deer-hounds, and by the hearth were two elder men. One, a tall dignified figure in the square cap and purple robe of a Bishop, with a face of great wisdom and sweetness; the other, still taller, with slightly grizzled hair and the weather-beaten countenance of a valiant and sagacious warrior, dressed in the leathern garments usually worn under armour.

As Jean emerged from the turret she was met and courteously greeted by Sir Patrick Drummond and his sons, as were also her sisters, with a grace and deference to their rank such as they hardly ever received from the nobles, and whose very rarity made Eleanor shy and uncomfortable, even while she was gratified and accepted it as her due.

The Bishop inclined his head and gave them a kind smile; but they had already seen him in the morning, as he was residing in the castle. He was the most fatherly friend and kinsman the young things knew, and though really their first cousin, they looked to him like an uncle. He insisted on due ceremony with them, though he had much difficulty in enforcing it, except with those Scottish knights and nobles who, like Sir Patrick Drummond, had served in France, and retained their French breeding.

So Jean, hawk and all, had to be handed to her seat by Sir Patrick as the guest, Eleanor by her brother, not without a little fraternal pinch, and Mary by the Bishop, who answered with a paternal caress to her murmured entreaty that she might keep wee Andie on her lap and give him his brose.

It was not a sumptuous repast, the staple being a haggis, also broth with chunks of meat and barley corns floating in it, the meat in strings by force of boiling. At the high table, each person had a bowl, either silver or wood, and each had a private spoon, and a dagger to serve as knife, also a drinking cup of various materials from the King's gold goblet downwards to horns, and a bannock to eat with the brose. At the middle table, trenchers and bannocks served the purpose of plates; and at the third there was nothing interposed between the boards of the table and the lumps of meat from which the soup had been made.

Jean's quick eyes soon detected more men-at-arms and with different badges from the thyme spray of Drummond, and her brother was evidently bursting with some communication, held back almost forcibly by the Bishop, who had established a considerable influence over the impetuous boy, while Sir Patrick maintained a wise and tedious political conversation about the peace between France and England, which was to be cemented by the marriage of the young King of England to the daughter of King René and the cession of Anjou and Maine to her father.

'Solid dukedoms for a lassie!' cried young James. 'What a craven to make such a bargain!'

'Scarce like his father's son,' returned Sir Patrick, 'who gat the bride with a kingdom for her tocher that these folks have well-nigh lost among them.'

'The saints be praised if they have.'

'I cannot forget, my liege, how your own sainted father loved and fought for King Harry of Monmouth. Foe as he was, I own that I shall never look on his like again.'

'I hold with you in that, Patie,' said Bishop Kennedy; 'and frown as you may, my young liege, a few years with such as he would do more for you—as it did with your blessed father—than ever we can.'

'I can hold mine own, I hope, without lessons from the enemy,' said James, holding his head high, while his ruddy locks flew back, his eyes glanced, and the red scar on his cheek widened. 'And is it true that you are for going through false England, Patie?'

'I made friends there when I spent two years there with your Grace's blessed father,' returned Sir Patrick, 'and so did my good wife. She longs to see the lady who is now Sister Clare at St. Katharine's in London, and it is well not to let her and Annis brook the long sea voyage.'

'There, Jean! I'd brook ten sea voyages rather than hold myself beholden to an Englishman!' quoth James.

'Nevertheless, there are letters and messages that it is well to confide to so trusty and wise-headed a knight as Glenuskie,' returned the Bishop.

The meal over, the silver bowls were carried round with water to wash the hands by the two young Drummonds, sons of Glenuskie, and by the King's pages, youths of about the same age, after which the Bishop and Sir Patrick asked license of the King to retire for consultation to the Bishop's apartment, a permission which, as may well be believed, he granted readily, only rejoicing that he was not wanted.

The little ones were carried off by Mary and Nurse Ankaret; and the King, his elder sisters and the other youths of condition, betook themselves, followed by half-a-dozen great dogs, to the court, where the Drummonds wanted to exhibit the horses procured for the journey, and James and Jean to show the hawks that were the pride of their heart.

By-and-by came an Italian priest, who acted as secretary to the Bishop—a poor little man who grew yellower and yellower, was always shivering, and seemed to be shrivelled into growing smaller and smaller by the Scottish winds, but who had a most keen and intelligent face.

'How now, Father Romuald,' called out James. 'Are ye come to fetch me?'

'*Di grazia, Signor Rè,*' began the Italian in some fear, as the dogs smelled his lamb-skin cape. 'The Lord Bishop entreats your Majesty's presence.'

His Majesty, who by the way, never was so called by any one else, uttered some bitter growls and grumbles, but felt forced to obey the call, taking with him, however, his beautiful falcon on his wrist, and and two huge deer hounds, who he declared should be of the council if he was.

Jean and Eleanor then closed upon David and Malcolm, eagerly demanding of them what they expected in that wonderful land to which they were going, much against the will of young David, who was sure there would be no hunting of deer, nor hawking for grouse, nor riding after an English borderer or Hieland cateran—nothing in fact worth living for! It would be all a-wearying with their manners and their courtesies and such like daft woman's gear! Why could not his father be content to let him grow up like his fellows, rough and free and ready?

'And knowing nothing better—nothing beyond,' said Eleanor.

'What would you have better than the hill and the brae? To tame a horse and fly a hawk, and couch a lance and bend a bow! That's what a man is made for, without fashing himself with letters and Latin and manners, no better than a monk; but my father would always have it so!'

'Ye'll be thankful to him yet, Davie,' put in his graver brother.

'Thankful! I shall forget all about it as soon as I am knighted, and make you write all my letters—and few enough there will be.'

'And you, Malcolm!' said Eleanor, 'would you be content to hide within four walls, and know nothing by your own eyes?'

'No indeed, cousin,' replied the lad; 'I long for the fair churches and cloisters and the learned men and books that my father tells of. My mother says that her brother, that I am named for, yearned to make this a land of peace and godliness, and to turn these high spirits to God's glory instead of man's strife and feud, and how it might have been done save for the slaying of your noble father—Saints rest him!—which broke mine uncle's heart, so that he died on his way home from pilgrimage. She hopes to pray at his tomb that I may tread in his steps, and be a blessing and not a curse to the land we love.'

Eleanor was silent, seeing for the first time that there might be higher aims than escaping from dulness, strife, and peril. Whilst Jean cried—

''Tis the titles and jousts, the knights and ladies that I care for—men that know what fair chivalry means, and make knightly vows to dare all sorts of foes for a lady's sake.'

'As if any lass was worth it,' said David, contemptuously.

'Aye, that's what you are! That's what it is to live in this savage realm,' returned Jean.

At this moment, however, Brother Romuald was again seen advancing, and this time with a request for the presence of the Ladies Jean and Eleanor.

'Could James be relenting on better advice?' they asked one another as they went.

'More likely,' said Jean, with a sigh, amounting to a groan, 'it is only to hear that we are made over like a couple of kine to some ruffianly reivers, who will beat a princess as soon as a scullion.'

They reached the chamber in time. Though the Bishop slept there, it also served for a council-chamber; and as he carried his chapel and household furniture about with him, it was a good deal more civilised-looking than even the princesses' room. Large folding screens worked with tapestry representing the lives of the saints shut off the part used as an oratory and that which served as a bedchamber, where indeed the good man slept on a rush mat on the floor. There was a table and several chairs and stools, all capable of being folded up for transport. The young King occupied a large chair of state, in which he twisted himself in a very undignified manner; the Bishop Chancellor sat beside him, with the Great Seal of Scotland and some writing materials, parchments, and letters before him; and Sir Patrick came forward to receive and seat the young ladies, and then remained standing—as few of his rank in Scotland would have done on their account.

'Well, lassies,' began the King, 'here's lads enow for you. There's the Master of Angus, as ye ken—' (Jean tossed her head)—'moreover auld Crawford wants one of you for his son.'

'The Tyger Earl,' gasped Eleanor.

'And with Stirling for your portion, the modest fellow,' added James. 'Ay, and that's not all. There's the MacAlpin threats me with all his clan if I dinna give you to him; and Mackay is not behindhand, but will come down with pibroch and braidsword and five hundred caterans to pay his court to you, and make short work of all others. My certie, sisters seem but a cause for threats from reivers, though maybe they would not be so uncivil if once they had you.'

'Oh, Jamie! oh! dear holy Father,' cried Eleanor, turning from the King to the Bishop, 'do not for mercy's sake give me over to one of those ruffians.'

'They are coming, Eleanor,' said James, with a boy's love of terrifying; 'the MacAlpin and Mackay are both coming down after you, and we shall have a fight like the Clan Chattan and Clan Kay. There's for the demoiselle who craved for knights to break lances for her!'

'Knights indeed! Highland thieves,' said Jean; 'and 'tis for what tocher they may force from you, James, not for her face.'

'You are right there, my puir bairn,' said the Bishop. 'These men—save perhaps the young Master of Angus—only seek your hands as a pretext for demands from your brother, and for spuilzie and robbery among themselves. And I for my part would never counsel his Grace to yield the lambs to the wolves even to save himself.'

'No, indeed,' broke in the King, 'we may not have them fighting down here, though it would be rare sport to look on, if you were not to be the prize. So my Lord Bishop here trows, and I am of the same mind, that the only safety is that the birds should be flown, and that you should have your wish and be away the morn, with Patie of Glenuskie here, since he will take the charge of two such silly lasses.'

The sudden granting of their wish took the maidens' breath away. They looked from one to the other without a word; and the Bishop, in more courtly language, explained that amid all these contending parties he could not but judge it wiser to put the King's two marriageable sisters out of reach, either of a violent abduction, or of being the cause of a savage contest, in either case ending in demands that would be either impossible or mischievous for the Crown to grant, and moreover in misery for themselves.

Sir Patrick added something courteous about the honour of the charge.

'So soon!' gasped Jean; 'are we really to go the morn?'

'With morning light, if it be possible, fair ladies,' said Sir Patrick.

'Ay,' said James, 'then will we take Mary and the weans to the nunnery in St. Mary's Wynd, where none will dare to molest them, and I shall go on to St. Andrews or Stirling as may seem fittest; while we leave old Seneschal Peter to keep the castle gates shut. If the Hielanders come they'll find the nut too hard for them to crack, and the kernel gone, so you'd best burn no more daylight, maidens, but busk ye, as women will.'

'Oh, Jamie, to speak so lightly of parting,' sighed Eleanor.

'Come—no fule greeting, now you have your will,' hastily said James, who could hardly bear it himself.

'Our gear!' faltered Jeanie, with consternation at their ill-furnished wardrobes.

'For that,' said the Bishop, 'you must leave the supply till you are over the Border, when the Lady Glenuskie will see to your appearing as nigh as may be as befits the daughters of Scotland among your English kin.'

'But we have not a mark between us,' said Jean, 'and all my mother's jewels are pledged to the Lombards.'

'There are monies falling due to the Crown,' said the Bishop, 'and I can advance enow to Sir Patrick to provide the gear and horses.'

'And my gude wife's royal kin are my guests till they win to their sister,' added Sir Patrick.

And so it was settled. It was an evening of bustle and a night of wakefulness. There were floods of tears poured out by and over sweet little Mary and good old Ankaret, not to speak of those which James scorned to shed. Had a sudden stop been put to the journey perhaps Eleanor would have been relieved but Jean sorely disappointed.

It was further decided that Father Romuald should accompany the party, both to assist in negotiations with Henry VI. and Cardinal Beaufort, and to avail himself of the opportunity of returning to his native land, far away from the blasts of the north, and to show cause to the Pope for erecting St. Andrews into an archiepiscopal see, instead of leaving Scotland under the primacy of York.

Hawk and harp were all the properties the princesses-errant took with them; but Jean, as her old nurse sometimes declared, loved Sky-wing better than all the weans, and Eleen's small travelling-harp was all that she owned of her father's—except the spirit that loved it.

(To be continued.)

A STORM IN A TEA-CUP.

BY SELINA GAYE.

VI.

CHINESE LANTERNS.

'S'il pleut à la fête d'Août
Les noix seront perdues;'

or, as Judy boldly translated, 'If it rains at the August fête, There won't be any nuts to *ate*.' That, however, would have been regarded as quite a minor calamity, in comparison with the extinguishing of the illuminations—at least, by most of those at Plancoët; and when the day came at last, there was much consultation of the Château barometer, i.e. in other words, of the stones of the entry which were often, and anxiously inspected, for they were inclined to be decidedly damp and the sky was overcast; but still it did not rain, and as long as that was the case, the darker it was the better it would set off the thirty thousand lamps, which, as Madame Aubert said, were to be used in lighting up the Place de la Fontaine.

It was growing dusk, and Rough and Rip van Winkle, commonly called Rip, who seemed to have an idea that something was in prospect and had arranged to lie in wait in the entry, lest they should be meanly cheated out of an evening walk, had, after all, weakly allowed themselves to be enticed upstairs by Judy, who had taken advantage of their trust in her and had shut them up, giving many injunctions to Nanon, who was going to stay at home, to let them out again when the party were well on their way, and not before, otherwise they would be sure to follow among the trees or in the hedges well out of sight, and then come out again when they were least expected and their presence was most inconvenient.

'It's a shame, though, I must say!' muttered Judy, hugging her captives, 'when all the world and his wife are going and taking their younger children, I don't see why two such little dogs as you should be left at home—I don't! But your Uncle Russell and your cousin Hester are quite hard-hearted, so it is no use whisking your tails—not a bit, nor "going dead" either, Rip! Good-bye!'

Dulcie meantime had put on her things, and remembering that she had left a book in the 'den,' had gone to look for and secure it.

She had just found it, and was going to put it safe in her own room when her eye was caught by something in the avenue—something white; some*one* in a white dress, she decided the next instant;

rather tall, she thought, for Cousin Hester, but still of course it must be she, though it was odd that she should be strolling in the avenue, when she had certainly come upstairs with the rest of the party.

Oh, yes, of course she might have gone across to the tower to say something to Victorine, and she might have strolled down the avenue while she was waiting for them, but she walked as if she were very tired, not at all as she usually did, and though she was singing a French song, it was in such a quavering, droning voice, as if she had turned into quite an old woman suddenly.

She had nearly reached the avenue-gate close to the tower now, and Dulcie was watching her with a sort of lazy curiosity, wishing that the boughs of one particular tree did not hang so low, as they half hid her every now and then, when a sudden bang at the door made her start and look round.

It was only Judy, but Judy in an indignant frame of mind.

'Why, I've been calling you ever so long; and I looked in your room and couldn't think what you had done with yourself. Why didn't you answer?'

'I didn't hear you till you banged at the door.'

'Oh, I say, that's a "marine," or else you are as bad as all the seven sleepers rolled into one, whoever they were—very slow folks, I should think. Who*ever* would have thought of looking for you here!'

'Well, *you* did!' said Dulcie good-humouredly.

'Not till I had looked everywhere else though! What in the world were you doing here? Just *dorming*, I suppose?'

'I wanted a book!'

'A book!' echoed Judy, with a contemptuous snort; 'what do you want to be always poking over a book for? You would be a great deal nicer if you didn't! Well, do come along now anyway;' and she bustled Dulcie off, with all the importance of a fussy sheep-dog sent after a strayed sheep, and presently brought her down in triumph, saying, 'Dulcibella was dorming in the dunces' den in the dimorts!'

The 'dimorts,' as Judy preferred to call the twilight, for reasons best known to herself, was just so far advanced by this time, that it was not easy to see who was who, in the unlighted hall; but as they emerged into the drive Dulcie noticed that Cousin Hester was *not* in white this evening, and then remembered hearing her say that she should not dress for dinner, as they were going out and it looked so like rain.

Then the white figure could not have been Cousin Hester! Whoever it was, no one was in the avenue now but an old woman wearing a white cap and red handkerchief and carrying a basket. She could not possibly have mistaken one for the other, though the old woman might perhaps have sung the song; but she was not nearly as tall, and besides it was a white *figure*, not a white *cap*, that she had seen.

But then, unless she had gone into the tower, where could she have vanished to so suddenly? for she certainly would not have had time to pass the house and walk the length of the back drive, at the slow pace at which she was moving.

'I say, Dulcie, wouldn't this be a proper sort of evening to meet the White Lady?' said Judy, as they walked on under the chestnuts, which looked dark and solemn in the dim light.

'Just listen to the owls trumpeting! and there is another family somewhere a little way off answering them! I don't think they are at all "moping owls," do you? In fact they are more like steam-engines whistling than anything. Did you ever see a baby-owl? Dear little fluffy things; but they do really hiss, like little engines. See, there goes one! How I *should* like to swoop about like that without making any noise! It would be so nice to surprise people. I wonder whether the White Lady has turned into an owl or an Undine. Just look at the mists curling up from the meadow and in and out of the trees. If you and Fando tried pretty hard, I should think you might see plenty of White Ladies, and I really do wonder that you have not made out some story about that little spring in the meadow where the ferns and forget-me-nots grow. Well, at all events, *I* can tell you that there is a washerwoman who walks about in the evening near one of the streams just here!

'I quite believe you, Judy, it is the way people usually do walk, you know, when they are coming to Plancöet, and I suppose washerwomen among the number.'

'Oh! but Uncle Russell, that is not what I mean! She isn't a live washerwoman. I don't know whether she got drowned, or smothered in the clothes, but something happened to her, and she is always singing a very doleful ditty.'

Dulcie had started a little when Judy first mentioned the White Lady; but for the present she thought no more about the matter, except to be glad that she had not said anything of what she had seen, for if she had, of course Judy would have fancied she was silly enough to believe in the Plancöet ghost, and she would never have heard the last of it.

No doubt it was someone who had gone in to see Victorine; but it certainly was *somebody*, and neither an owl nor a cow—of that Dulcie felt positive! They were on their way to the town now, that they might enter the little Place de la Fontaine by what Madame Aubert considered the best and prettiest way, and soon they turned into the long, winding avenue which zig-zagged gradually down to it through the wood.

'*Oh!* isn't it pretty?'

'It's like glow-worms!'

'It's like Aladdin's Garden!'

'No, it's Fairy-land, it's just like Fairy-land!' were the exclamations as they looked down it and beheld crossed hoops of many-coloured

Chinese lanterns placed at intervals high up among trees, making the avenue look like a perfect arcade of light, when viewed from a little distance. Crowds of people were streaming down it, laughing, talking, gesticulating in the merriest and most good-humoured way; but certainly no tongues wagged faster than those of the Plancöet party, and every turn in the avenue was the signal for a fresh outburst of delighted exclamations. The lamps and lanterns were clustered more and more thickly together the farther they descended, and when presently the sound of distant music struck faintly on their ears, Judy announced that 'she felt *exactly* as if she were walking into Fairy-land!'

Another turn, and there, some little distance still below them, lay the small valley, now one blaze of light and thronged with a very animated, but perfectly well-behaved crowd, who had already begun dancing in the wide space between the rows of trees in the centre which was especially reserved for that purpose. In the midst, raised up and surrounded by a framework of light, sat the band, playing most lively dance-music, and high among the dark foliage of the trees, or hanging in festoons between them, sparkled thousands of coloured lamps, lighting up the whole scene as brilliantly as if it had been broad noon-day, instead of a particularly dark and starless evening.

Since those old days, we have had grand illuminations with the electric light at South Kensington, which are beautiful too in their way, 'but,' says Judy, 'it isn't the La Fontaine way, and I don't think it can hold a candle to it, though it *is* electric! In the first place, there are not the trees, and in the second there are too many people. We were not packed together like matches in a box at La Fontaine. And thirdly, there is no dancing; how can there be, when there is not room to stir, and English people are too stiff to dance; and then—you may say just what you like—but I don't believe anything can be as pretty as the dear old Chinese lanterns and the little lamps. Oh! yes, it is a very fine blaze, no doubt, but I am sure the colours are not half as soft and pretty. It's just the difference between a theatre and Fairy-land, and *I* like Fairy-land best.'

But now Uncle Russell piloted his party round to a stand which had been erected for the accommodation of those who were, or had to be, satisfied, to look on at the dancing, without taking part in it, and he soon had them all safely settled where they could see everything without the risk of being lost in the crowd.

At first, it was amusement enough simply to watch the people streaming hither and thither, and to listen to the band; then Fando and Dulcie began looking at the caps, which told so much of the wearer's circumstances and position in life. There was a child in a tight blue calico cap, which was not very becoming certainly, and the girl with it, an elder sister apparently, had wooden-soled shoes, dark cotton skirt, blue-striped apron, red and white kerchief and a cap, which, though white, was only of calico too, without a bit of frilling or border of any sort and as close-fitting as an old-fashioned bonnet-cap—quite poor people from the country, Fando decided; but how thoroughly they seemed to be enjoying themselves!

'And those girls there in the nice white caps with frills look like servants, and the stiff linen caps plaited up like cocked hats are what some of the washerwomen wear; they look like butterflies' wings sometimes, or perhaps moths', because they don't shut up! Oh! and there is an odd, long cap, something like a sugar-loaf—I wonder what part that comes from! Some of the peasants have really beautiful old lace, but I don't think they, any of them, wear ribbons, unless they are shop-keepers, and *they* wear them only out-of-doors, with tulle and lace and blonde; indoors they wear nice white cambric or muslin, and, do you know, though Madame Aubert is so well off, she would not think of putting on a bonnet even in cold weather! She would be just as much ashamed to wear one as you or I should be to go without. Only ladies wear bonnets and hats here; of course, it is different in Paris and large towns, I daresay, but I think there is something very respectable in people's being proud of their own station and not wanting to look as if they belonged to another, and I do think caps are a great deal *prettier* than our hats and bonnets with their smart feathers and flowers. I can't think how they manage to keep them so clean though, as if they had just been fresh put on; but they are very particular about it, and you hardly ever see a dingy-looking one, even among the very poor.'

'I say,' put in Judy, 'there's a woman with *plaisirs pour oublier vos douleurs*—they are wafers, Dulcie, to make you forget your melancholies if you've got any.'

'Have you got any *sous*, Judy?' inquired Willie in an audible whisper.

'No! *that* I haven't, not a single scrap of one, and besides I am going to be a staunch teetotaler just at present, so there won't be any use in your wanting me to buy *plaisirs* or figs or anything else, unless Daddy should happen to think of sending me a present. But I say, really you know, I have got the tingles in my feet! It seems such a pity not to be down there!'

'Oh! there's Marie!' cried Alick, having spied her out among the long lines of dancers.

'Where? Oh! so she is! Oh! *couldn't* we go and dance too?' said Judy in longing tones, her feet beating time to the music.

'I don't see how you can, dear; I couldn't possibly let you go into the crowd alone, and I really can't offer to go with you.'

'But, Cousin Hester, if I could go to Marie? See! there she is. I wish I could make her see us. Lend me your handkerchief, Fando, I have forgotten mine,' and Judy proceeded to wave vigorously, in the hope of attracting Marie's attention.

Suddenly she stopped and turned round to Dulcie, who was behind her, saying, 'Look! there he is! the man who looked at us the other morning; I am sure it is, by his light coat!'

'Well, what if it is?' said Dulcie shortly, turning her head the other way.

'Why, you might just look and see whether you know him, that's all.'

'I don't know *any*body belonging to Dinan.'

'I never said he belonged to Dinan; I believe he is an Englishman; his coat's English anyway, and you might have known him at Dinard.'

'I didn't know *any* Englishman at Dinard or S. Malo either, but Uncle John,' said Dulcie, glad of the loop-hole Judy had given her.

'Well, it might have been in England, or it might be nowhere! I don't see what harm it would have done you just to look, unless you're afraid.'

But at this moment Marie, having at last chanced to look up to the stand, caught sight of the handkerchief and left her place among the dancers to speak to the children, and Judy was all eagerness to know whether she might go back with her and dance too, 'it did look so lovely! and really she was getting quite cramped with keeping still,' and before Cousin Hester had time to answer she had scrambled down.

Then Alick and Willie of course wanted to go too, and Marie smilingly promised to take charge of all three, Jack feeling rather too dignified to care to be of the party.

'Well, it is very good-natured of Marie, but you must not stay long, Judy, for she won't get much fun herself with three madcaps to look after,' said Cousin Hester; 'and here, Alick, you know you and Willie must each present your partners with a cone of *plaisirs*, so here are some sous!' and then away they skipped and were soon dancing as busily as the rest.

No sooner were they safely gone, than Dulcie peeped cautiously round, and at once saw that Judy's terribly quick eyes had not deceived her. There was Mr. Beaumont sure enough, but he had not spied *her* this time, and she kept her head so diligently turned away from him, that at last Jack asked what she was looking at; and she was heartily glad when Uncle Russell proposed that they should all get down and walk about a little.

Just as they moved, however, the light coat moved too, and came so close to the stand, that Dulcie, in her anxiety to escape notice, hurried blindly down the rather awkward steps, and caught her frock, and this so nearly made her miss her footing that Mr. Beaumont put out his hand to help her. She recovered herself, however, without assistance, and brushed hastily past, not seeming to see either it or him, and though he saw that she coloured up, of course that might have been the effect of the stumble and the momentary fright it had given her. He had no reason whatever to suppose that she was afraid to meet him, for they had parted on excellent terms, so far as he knew, only a few days ago.

Meanwhile Fando, who was behind and had seen what had happened, was asking whether Dulcie had hurt herself, and was offering pins and help for the unfortunate frock, whose gathers had suffered rather severely; and, while she fastened it up as well as she could, she said—

'You did not see that gentleman trying to help you, did you? I think he thought you were coming down on your nose.'

'Did he? I didn't look,' answered Dulcie, hurriedly; and then they hastened on after the rest, and walked up and down with them for some little time among the gay crowd.

But Dulcie's pleasure was spoilt for the evening, and she was not at all sorry when Uncle Russell announced that it was time to go home; though, as Judy and Alick had a great deal to say about the delights of the dancing, no one noticed how silent she had suddenly become but Fando.

And Fando wondered a little if she too had recognised the gentleman by his light coat, but it seemed so very improbable that Dulcie should have any reason for avoiding him, or being afraid of him, if she had ever met him before, which also was not at all likely, that Fando, who was inclined to take a very matter-of-fact view of things, supposed that Dulcie was a little tired, and a little cross about her 'gathers,' and a little generally upset by the awkward fall she had so nearly had.

'But it *was* a pity,' she thought to herself, 'that Dulcie should look so guilty, and there was no other word for it, when Judy mischievously said that she had seen "her friend". again, and that he had a friend with him, and they were both buying ginger-bread and *plaisirs* from one of the women who went about with trays of these and similar interesting articles. It was a pity, but she supposed she could not help it, and if so, she was very much to be pitied, for it must be wretched *to be* as uncomfortable as she *looked*.'

And so, when Uncle Russell asked pleasantly 'who Dulcie's friend was,' Fando, pitying her confusion, and believing it all owing to Judy's teasing, thought to do her a kindness by answering for her, and said—

'It is only Judy's nonsense, uncle; Dulcie does not know any one here at all. Somebody, you know, nodded to us the other morning—by mistake, I suppose; and Judy will have it that it was a friend of Dulcie's. It amuses her to have somebody to tease about, that's all.'

But Judy was more observant about some things than Fando, and when, as they threaded their way through the crowd, they came upon the light coat again, she saw, if no one else did, how carefully Dulcie avoided looking up until they had passed it, and she drew her own conclusions accordingly.

'Underminded! that's what she is. I don't like underminded people!' said Miss Judy righteously. Certainly no one could accuse *her* of being 'underminded,' or deceitful; but there was nothing in that to boast of, for she had no temptation to be otherwise than outspoken; and, if she had but known it, poor Dulcie hated anything like untruthfulness quite as heartily as herself, and was miserable now because, though she had not said anything untrue herself, she had allowed Fando to do so without setting her right. Almost she wished that some one would ask her a point-blank question which she *must* answer.

She went to her room feeling very tired, and as she looked up at the portrait over the chimney-piece, for the first time it struck her as being—well, a little *odd*, that she should have seen the figure in the avenue, on the very evening when she was going to meet Mr. Beaumont again. She did not, of course, believe in the 'White Lady,' but it *was* odd, and who could it have been? Victorine's friends did not wear white; it might have been some one wearing only a large white apron perhaps, but her impression was that the figure was in white from head to foot, like the lady in the portrait, at which she glanced again a little uneasily.

It was all very well to say that you did not believe in such things when the sun was shining and lighting up all the dark corners, but it was quite another thing when 'old mother Nature followed you up to bed in her suit of black velvet and diamonds,' as the 'Professor' says, for then 'every creak of her sandals and every whisper of her lips is full of mystery and fear.' And to-night it was all black velvet without the diamonds; and though Dulcie could not have told what she was afraid of, and would probably have said that she was not afraid at all, somehow the dark wainscoting and the velvet hangings looked more sombre than usual, and she started uneasily when she dropped her comb with a clatter, and moved across the polished floor cautiously, as if she feared unpleasant consequences from making any unnecessary noise.

Moreover, she carefully avoided looking up again at the 'White Lady.'

VII.

A SPIDER IN THE MORNING!

THE day after the La Fontaine fête was wet, as the hail-stones had predicted that it would be, and Cousin Hester was not sorry, except for poor Mademoiselle Rioulle's own sake, that this was one of the mornings on which she came to give French lessons at Plancöet, since the boys would be safely employed for at least an hour.

'Let me see, Mademoiselle comes at ten, doesn't she, so you have nearly an hour yet. Is your French letter ready, Jack?' she said, as they were standing about in the dining-room after breakfast.

'Yes, almost, and Alick and I have got our books and things over at the tower, and the kite we are making; and Mademoiselle is going to give us our lesson over there, because Judy was such a bother last time—well, Judy, you know you were!'

'Well, you know, if you take the pains to say such very funny things, I should think you would be hurt if some one did not laugh at them. It's very demeaning when people don't see a joke. You *dear!*' and Judy snatched up Rip, who was endeavouring to attract notice. 'You dear! you haven't seen your missis for a whole quarter of an hour, have you? a whole quarter of an hour! I know just what you feel about it, I do! Now then, come along, you and Rough, for you've got to do lessons like other people. Now then, sit up and beg both of you side by side, and you shall have something good!'

'You ought to tell them to *faire le beau*,' said Alick; 'that's what Mademoiselle says.'

'Then, it's too bad of her to insult two good little English dogs, and puzzle their poor little brains. Now, Rough, what are you thinking of? Do you call that sitting up? lolling about like a doll that's lost half her bran! You ought to be ashamed of yourself, sir! There! go up against the wall, if you can't do any how else!' and Judy propped the two victims up side by side, or rather tried to do so, for as fast as she got one into position, the other subsided limply and fell down 'all of a heap.' 'One might as well try to make a yard of calico stand up!' cried Judy impatiently; 'there, come along and do "trust." Trust, Rip, trust!—*good* little dog!'

But, before Judy said 'paid for,' Rough had sneaked slyly up behind and snapped up the bit of biscuit which was to have rewarded poor Rip's obedience. 'They are as jealous as ever they can be! Now you see, if I make much of Rough, Rip will come jumping up and "fall dead," and do anything to make me notice him!' And Judy began hugging Rough, and praising and patting him till poor Rip went nearly frantic.

'You certainly are a sad tease, Judy, even to your beloved dogs,' said Cousin Hester, coming into the room again just in time to witness this performance.

'Dogs are silly things, *I* think,' said Jack, who spoke with great deliberation; 'they are so fussy and always wanting to be noticed. They'd rather be teased than let alone. Now, cats don't care a bit what people think about them!'

'All nice cats purr when they're pleased; and I'm sure they come and rub up against you and stick up their tails and look pleased, and then perhaps give you a scratch, nasty, deceitful things.'

'For all that there is something very dignified about a cat,' said Cousin Hester. 'There is one at the British Museum which I admire very much. She will walk down the whole length of the King's Library in the most dignified way, with her tail well up, and looking calmly independent of the policeman and every one else, quite at her ease and self-possessed, and perfectly well-bred, without an atom of at the tower, and the kite we are making; and Mademoiselle is going to give us our lesson over there, because Judy was such a bother last time—well, Judy, you know you were!'

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'Dogs are silly things, *I* think,' said Jack, who spoke with great deliberation; 'they are so fussy and always wanting to be noticed. They'd rather be teased than let alone. Now, cats don't care a bit what people think about them!'

'All nice cats purr when they're pleased; and I'm sure they come and rub up against you and stick up their tails and look pleased, and then perhaps give you a scratch, nasty, deceitful things.'

'For all that there is something very dignified about a cat,' said Cousin Hester. 'There is one at the British Museum which I admire very much. She will walk down the whole length of the King's Library in the most dignified way, with her tail well up, and looking calmly independent of the policeman and every one else, quite at her ease and self-possessed, and perfectly well-bred, without an atom of self-consciousness; ready to be friendly, yet not going in the least out of her way to attract attention. In fact, I thought her quite a model of good manners. Fando, do you remember poor Alexandrine de la Ferronaye, how she said that at one time she "could not see a cat without wondering what it would think of her?" How wonderfully she got over her self-consciousness though, when she had found something better than herself to think about! But come, I must not stand gossiping here, for I have some writing to do for Uncle Russell, and I should like to see you two boys safe in the tower.'

'For Mademoiselle to smother with French instead of feathers; one is about as fluffy as the other!'

'Well, at least you won't have any difficulty in finding something to talk to her about to-day, and you can ask about the boat-races. I fancy that it will clear up by dinner-time, and then you two will be able to go. *Au revoir!*'

The boys went off; and Judy, announcing that she was quite ready for Mademoiselle, and that it would be a good opportunity to print some ferns, graciously invited Fando and Dulcie to the Den to see the process, which was a patent of her own.

'I do wish it wouldn't rain though,' she groaned, as they went upstairs, 'it makes me feel so skippish. I wish Mademoiselle were not coming, or we might have had a good game of hide-and-seek. There are plenty of places upstairs, without disturbing Uncle Russell at all.'

'Well, if it doesn't clear, we can this afternoon, perhaps.'

'Ah! but—' said Judy, shaking her head and speaking solemnly, 'do you know I saw a spider this morning?'

'And I saw a hornet last night! One from the nest under the roof, close to my window, you know, came tapping at the glass directly I lighted my candle. One hornet is worse than a dozen spiders!'

'Of course, because there's safety in numbers; but I told you I had seen *a* spider, and you ought not to be so fribbling about it.'

'Jack says "a spider in time saves nine," when his birds are ill!'

'A spider in the morning is a warning, and a spider at night's a delight.'

'A warning of rain, I suppose, and that is come, and is not so very dreadful.'

'Ah! you may laugh, but Nanon saw it, and she said, "Une araignée le matin, du chagrin, une araignée le soir, de l'espoir."'

'Yes, and in Devonshire the poor spider must not show itself at night, so between you it always comes at the wrong time.'

Judy enjoyed a mess, and when, as now, she was obliged to find some quiet occupation, there was nothing which was more to her taste than pasting or printing. First, there was some paper to be oiled, and it was soon evident that Cousin Hester had not been by any means unreasonable in suggesting that the table should be entirely covered with the very shabbiest old cloth that Plancöet could furnish, for Willie joined the company, and between the two a good deal more oil was consumed than could be accounted for by what went on the paper. And then the oiled paper had to be smoked over a candle, a delicate process requiring much care, as, in Judy's anxiety to get it 'a nice deep black,' it was very apt to get burnt instead. Then, when the paper was ready, a fern was carefully pressed upon it face downwards and transferred to the page it was to adorn, where, if properly printed, not too black and not 'smudged,' it left a very perfect impression of itself, veining and all. Fando had a book in which she had done several pretty groups in this way, and Dulcie thought she should like to have one too. 'And you can do all sorts of leaves in the same way,' said Fando, turning the pages, and showing various specimens; 'but they ought to be fresh, Judy. I am quite sure, they are not half as good if you keep them till they are nearly dry.'

'Oh! well, I am not going to rectify ferns, when I can get out of doors, that would be too much of a good thing. Willie, I think you would look extremely nice if your face were printed over; it would be like tattooing, you know, only without the pricking, and much more elegant.'

'Well, I don't mind!' answered Willie valiantly.

'Mind! I should think not, a little scrap of a fellow like you; why, you ought to be proud to have so much trouble taken with you.'

'So I am, Judy; really I am.'

'Then you are very silly, Willie,' interposed Fando; 'you'll look a fright, and Judy is certain to make a mess of your collar.'

'Don't you interfere, Fando, he will look very nice indeed. Here's a most delicate little lady-fern to go across his forehead, and you can't have anything prettier than that, *I'm* sure. See!' and Judy forthwith applied the fern, and was so well satisfied with the result, that she went on with the decorative process until there was hardly a square inch of Willie's face left its natural colour, and Fando sent him off at once to Marie to be washed.

'Oh, dear,' sighed Judy, going to the window, 'I do wish it would leave off raining; don't you, Dulcibella?'

No answer.

'I say, Dulcibella, Bella, Sweet Bella, Sweet and Lovely! What, won't you answer to any of them!'

Having once allowed herself to begin, Judy went on recklessly, regardless of consequences.

'Perhaps *Douce et Belle* would do better then. *Douce et Belle!* dear me, why that must be Dowsabel, I *wish* I had thought of that before, it's so very pretty, don't you think so? Dowsabel!'

'Judy, you are a real torment; why don't you wash your hands if you have done printing, and get something else to do?' said Fando severely.

'I'm glad I'm real any way, I hate shams! but it's extravagant to wash one's hands too often, and, besides, I want to know whether

Dulcie would like to come to the town this afternoon and buy a book to do ferns in. I know *you* are not going out, if it clears ever so, because you have gone and got a throat; and Jack and Alick are going to the boat-races with Uncle Russell, and it's hard lines that he won't have us too, but he won't, though he is generally good-natured, I must say, so I expect we shall have to go for a walk with Marie!'

'Well, I am sure if I were Dulcie I wouldn't have anything at all to do with you, until you learnt to behave properly.'

'I dare say you wouldn't, because you are an Irish woman. *I* can't learn without practising; but I suppose you could swim before you went into the water. But, for all that, Judith—did—behead—Holofernes, six hundred and eighty-eight! I always remember that date,' and, as she uttered the words, Judy sprang suddenly upon Fando from behind and almost throttled her.

'Judy, you little horror! you behave exactly like a caravan-child sometimes! See what a mess you have made of me,' said Fando, shaking herself in good-humoured disgust.

'Where the gentle cassowary
  Roams the plains of Timbuctoo,
Once I ate a missionary!
  Hat and coat, and hymn-book, too!

'Why don't you and Dulcie do something amusing? I don't believe Dulcie has spoken a dozen words since breakfast. Ah! I know, she is thinking about last night; aren't you, Dulcie? I tell you what, Fando, the very next time we meet that light coat, I shall just ask him whether he has lost anybody, for I don't see why he should look at us, if he hasn't; in fact, I think it is taking a great liberty, and I am sure Dulcie does not like it. Do you, Dulcie?' said Judy, looking at her in the most innocent way, and enjoying the sight of her crimson face.

'Dulcie doesn't like your nonsense, and no wonder. You seem to want to be disagreeable this morning, and I believe it is all because of idle hands! If they are not in mischief, your tongue is.'

'And I suppose you think you and Dulcie are good little busy-bees, don't you? and you'd like to sting a poor drone to death! That's what *I* call being a Pharisee—

'How doth the little busy bee
Delight to bark and bite!
It gathers honey all the day,
And eats it all the night.

'Well, if you *won't* do anything to make yourselves agreeable, I must go and look for what is left of Willie. He must be nearly soaped away, poor little victim, if Marie has been washing him all this time.'

And, to Dulcie's infinite relief, Judy disappeared, and for the present the Den saw no more of her.

But she was no farther off than the opposite side of the passage, in that one of the unoccupied rooms which had the extremely desirable trap-door already mentioned. Here she and Willie established themselves, and for a few minutes they were amused to watch the unsuspecting Nanon at her work, and guess what she was making.

'There's going to be custards in the egg-cups,' whispered Willie; 'there's the orange-flower bottle on the table!'

'H—sh! she'll hear you, if you speak so loud. Oh, come away quick!' as a great cackling was heard, and Nanon pounced upon one of the chickens which were pecking about under the table. 'Well, I do call that mean and horrid! I *hate* French people!'

'Has she cutted its head off?' asked Willie very solemnly.

'Oh, I don't know; don't look! I should like to cut Nanon's off for her.'

'They've left off chuckling now,' said Willie, presently venturing back to the peep-hole from which Judy had retired in disgust; and then it occurred to her that it would be a good way of punishing Nanon and amusing themselves, if they were to 'fish' in the kitchen below; and she went and routed out a good big fish-hook from among Jack's possessions, fastened it to the end of a long string, and when Nanon's back was safely turned, hooked up anything that came within reach, and then, after Nanon had had a good hunt for it, let it down again when she was not looking, thoroughly enjoying her lamentations and exclamations at the extraordinary way in which her things contrived to get out of sight while she was attending to the various pots and pans upon the hearth. Once or twice she thought she heard a little whispering and chuckling overhead, but there was no one to be seen, though the trap-door was open, and she had not the least idea that she was being purposely tormented, for they heard her mutter to herself, '*Une araignée le matin, du chagrin,*' so that she evidently blamed the poor spider.

Meanwhile, Dulcie, being left in quiet, was trying to write to Aunt Mary and describe the fête at La Fontaine, which she seemed to find a rather difficult matter, in spite of the peace which now reigned in the 'Den.'

'I am afraid you have got a headache,' said Fando, presently, looking at her; 'I wish Judy would learn not to be so tiresome. I am accustomed to her, and I don't mind for myself, if she is not too outrageous, but she ought to behave better to you, and I would ask Cousin Hester to speak to her, only——'

'Oh, no, *pray* don't; I don't care! I mean it was not that which gave me a headache, I had it when I got up.'

'Had not you better put your letter away until it is better?'

'Perhaps I had,' said Dulcie, with a sigh; 'but I am afraid Aunt Mary will think I don't like writing to her, and I do.'

'I am sure she won't think anything so disagreeable; why *should* she? Do you know, Dulcie, I think you worry yourself about things you needn't,' said Fando, smiling.

But, the moment she had said the words, she wished she had not spoken, for Dulcie coloured up as if she were annoyed.

'You don't mind my saying so, do you?' Fando went on. 'I didn't mean to vex you, only I think if you could manage to get a thicker skin, you know, it would be so much more comfortable for you, and Judy would leave off teasing if it were not worth while.'

'It isn't *Judy!*' began Dulcie, rather hotly, 'it's *every*thing! You can't understand! I mean'—she stammered in some confusion, her face growing redder and redder—'I mean—of course I don't like being called Dulcibella and all those names, but it doesn't really matter, and I had a great deal rather you did not say anything to Cousin Hester; she would only think I was silly.'

'I don't think she would, but perhaps she might think it better not to seem to take any notice. She would be vexed though, and disappointed, too, for Judy really has been so much better lately. I suppose it is the rain which has made her have such a mad fit this morning. But, Dulcie, if there is anything else,' said Fando, hesitating, 'anything I can help you in, you will tell me, won't you?'

'But there isn't! What makes you think there is?'

'I thought you seemed rather worried, that's all; but, if you are not, so much the better! Hark, what *is* that?'

Fando hurried to the door, and was nearly upset by Judy, who rushed in crying—

'Oh, Fando, do make haste and come, poor Nanon is dreadfully hurt, and it's my fault, and she's screaming horribly.'

'Nanon! where?'

'In the kitchen; come along! We were fishing, Willie and I, through the trap-door, you know—and we had fished up a basket—and somehow it toppled down again—just when she was lifting something off the fire—and she dropped it on her foot—and then she shrieked—and I did not stop to see—and I was afraid to speak and ask what was the matter—for fear of frightening her worse!'

While Judy thus breathlessly explained, as well as she could, they were running down the stairs, and when they reached the kitchen they found that Cousin Hester and Uncle Russell were already there, and that Victorine, Marie, Antoine, and Françoise, who worked in the garden, had all rushed in on hearing the screams.

The women were all gesticulating and lamenting and exclaiming at the very top of their voices, without making any attempt to help poor Nanon, who seemed to be in great pain, and was sitting in a chair, rocking herself to and fro, moaning, groaning, sobbing loudly, and declaring that she was going to die at once, and that some one must go immediately and fetch the lawyer to make her will.

'She has scalded her foot, and we must do something to it quickly. Cotton-wool and oil will be best,' and Cousin Hester, who had been kneeling by Nanon, trying to discover the extent of her injuries, flew upstairs, while Uncle Russell pulled uneasily at his moustache, and, mustering his best British French, made sundry ineffectual attempts to administer consolation and encouragement to the very noisy sufferer, whom, in the confusion of the moment, he addressed as 'ma bonne femme!'

Judy was completely sobered now and a good deal awed; but she was never a coward, and as soon as she was able to get near her she said—

'Oh, Nanon, I am so sorry, I am truly. I didn't mean to do it, I didn't, indeed!'

'It was *you* then, Mademoiselle Judy?' said Nanon, stopping her moans for an instant and looking positively relieved; 'ah, I thought—I—ah, it is cruel; but I might have known, when I killed the spider this morning, assuredly, *une araignée le matin, du chagrin.* Ah, *mais*, it is cruel! *Aïe, aïe! Ah! la la, la la!*' and Nanon began rocking and groaning again, while Judy, much distressed, declared that she did not mean to be cruel, and seemed to be on the verge of tears.

'She doesn't mean you, dear, it is the pain,' said Cousin Hester, coming back with the remedies she had been to fetch; 'you shall tell me about it presently, but the kindest thing you can do now is to go away and let me attend to Nanon's poor foot, for I am afraid it is badly hurt. *All* of you go away, please; you too, father,' she went on, smiling at him, and well knowing how thankful he would be to be released; 'all but Mademoiselle Rioulle, if she will be so kind as to stay and help me.' For the little crowd had by this time been yet farther increased by the arrival of Mademoiselle, Jack, Alick, and Jean-Baptiste the cow-boy, who stood modestly by the back-door.

'Here, come along, all of you,' said Uncle Russell, hurrying the children down the steps and waving his hand to Antoine, Jean-Baptiste, and the maids, to intimate that they were to vanish into the garden.

(*To be continued.*)

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCLXX.

THE DRAGONS' TEETH OF SPAIN.

1699–1702.

THE powers of Europe had fixed upon the child, Joseph of Bavaria, to fill the throne of Spain, and if possible avert a struggle on the demise of the unfortunate Charles II. of Spain. But the treaty had scarcely been confirmed before it was known that the poor boy was dead; and there was general consternation at the idea of the inevitable war that would ensue. The Elector of Bavaria, in his disappointment and grief, is even said to have accused the Viennese Court of poisoning his son, though probably the situation was perplexing enough to them to prevent all ambition.

Fresh arrangements became needful, and Louis caused his ambassador, Marshal Tallard, to consult William on a new treaty. According to this, Charles of Austria was to have the kingdom of Spain and the Netherlands, Louis obtaining the Spanish provinces of Guipuscoa and all the Italian possessions, the greatest object of William being to keep him out of Flanders, where he would have been an overpowering neighbour to Holland.

Poor Charles himself was very much hurt when he understood that all his kinsmen were counting on his speedy death to seize on his inheritance. He had never been healthy or capable, he had scarcely learnt more than reading and writing, but he had enjoyed hunting, hawking, and bull fights during his earlier manhood, and had been deeply attached to his fair young wife, Maria Louisa of Orleans. But, from the time of her death, he had drooped more and more. Nothing gave him any pleasure; the second marriage arranged for him with Mariana of Neuburg, sister to the Empress, had failed to rouse him, although he was greatly grieved at a report that the hand of the Dauphin had been secretly offered to her to induce her to espouse the cause of France; but she was thoroughly Austrian in feeling and devoted to the cause of her nephew, Charles.

The King's inclination was towards his Austrian kindred; indeed, he so much disliked the French, that he was pleased when one of the Court ladies got rid of a French-speaking parrot. But he could not bear to think of his vast dominions being dismembered; and the feeling of his subjects was of the same kind, so that the treaty was regarded with the utmost resentment, the Spaniards, in fact, caring more that the realms should be kept together than which prince should be their heir. The Queen, however, and the Austrian ambassador, Count von Harrach, had made themselves very unpopular, whereas the Marquis of Harcourt, the French ambassador, was adroit, agreeable, and lavish of gifts and money. He contrived to represent to Charles II. that the Partition Treaty had been wholly the fault of the English and Dutch, and thus the King was induced to order their ambassadors, James Stanhope and De Schonenburg, to leave Madrid. The Emperor Leopold, afraid of the consequences of the quarrel, and afraid too of present expense, would not allow his son to present himself at Madrid.

The Archbishop of Toledo, Cardinal Puerto Carrero, likewise was at work on the conscience of the King, in favour of the more direct heir, who, in spite of the treaty, might prevent the partition. Charles, weak as he was, had an honest, single-minded desire to do right. He shut himself up in the Convent of the Escorial, spending many days in fasting and prayer for direction. Descending into the vault, he caused the coffins of his forefathers to be opened, and stood gazing at them one after the other, coming at last to his own beloved Louise, on whose features hardly any change had passed, and who thus recalled his happiest days; 'Soon shall I be with her!' he said, as he turned away.

His meditations decided him that he had no right to alter the laws of hereditary succession, and therefore that to the child of his sister the throne appertained, though his love was for the Austrian prince, nephew through the mother's side to his wife. Such an effort was the resolution that he looked like a man of seventy instead of thirty-eight. He wrote to ask the Pope's advice, and Innocent XII. could not but confirm his belief that the Divine right should come before expediency. He therefore caused his will to be made, designating as heir Philip, Duke of Anjou, the second son of the Dauphin, who, with his eldest son, resigned any right, so as to prevent the actual union of the crowns. 'God is the disposer of kingdoms,' the poor King said, as he signed the will. 'Now I am nothing.' He fainted, and continued in a state of gradual decay for a month, at the end of which he died, on the 1st of November, 1700, thus ending the line of Charles V., which had shown a marked declension in vigour in each generation through the three Philips, one Charles standing at the head, the other at the foot of the scale of intellect.

There was no question about the personal qualities of the two rivals, for the Duke of Anjou was only seventeen, the Archduke Charles fifteen years old, and, in point of fact, neither had any brilliancy of intellect or energy.

As soon as the poor King was dead the Council assembled to open his will, and outside waited, in great anxiety, the ambassador Harrach, and Blécourt, who represented Harcourt. This personage had asked leave of absence, and was at Bayonne, collecting forces to take possession of Guipuscoa, which, by the Treaty of Partition, was to fall to Louis.

The contents of the will had been kept an entire secret, even from the Queen, and so confident was Harrach that he stood opposite the door, in full triumph. At last it opened, and was shut, then opened again, and the Duke of Abrantes came out. He looked about as if in quest of some one, and turning full upon Harrach, said in Spanish, 'Sir, I have much pleasure,'—pausing for an embrace —'sir, I am delighted that for my whole life, and with the utmost joy, I part with your Grace, and take leave of the most august house of Austria!'

Then he went off, every one running after him to know what were really the terms of the will, and despatches were instantly sent off. The French one reached Fontainebleau on the 9th of November, and great was the commotion it excited. Louis summoned a council of four persons, the Dauphin, the Duke de Beauvilliers, the Marquis de Torcy, and the Chancellor Pontchartrain, to consider whether he was bound by the Partition Treaty, or whether the King's will absolved him from it; or, taking it on the side of expediency, whether France were in condition to begin a fresh war with all Europe, except Spain, against her. The good Duke of Beauvilliers alone was for the observance of the treaty, but the matter was kept secret for three days longer before the King decided on the first of those three great attempts upon Spain which have uniformly proved fatal to the power of France.

Finally, the youth was summoned, and thus addressed by his grandfather: 'Monsieur, the King of Spain has made you King. The grandees demand you; the people wish for you; and, for my part, I consent. Be a good Spaniard. That is henceforth your first duty, but never forget that you were born a Frenchman.' Then, with all his force and dignity, he said to the Court, 'Here is the King of Spain,' and thenceforth treated the young Philip V. as on an equality with himself.

Philip had always been the good boy of the family. Unlike his fiery impetuous senior, he was declared by Fénélon and Beauvilliers never to have given them the least cause of complaint, and the King, fearing perhaps that this docility might mean weakness, decided on supplying a spirited wife. He seems to have believed that a princess of Savoy might have this requisite, because the young Duchess of Burgundy, Marie Adelaide of Savoy, was the darling of the Court. She was overflowing with life and spirit, with a sweet caressing manner, and devoted to Madame de Maintenon, whom she always called '*Ma tante.*' St. Simon's memoirs describe her thus: 'Decidedly plain, her cheeks pendent, her brow overhanging, an unmeaning nose, eyes most full of expression and beauty, a spirited, majestic, and gracious pose of the head, expression of countenance and smile, a tall, well-formed, slender, easy figure, a gait like a goddess on the clouds, her youthful, lively, active gaiety always prevailed and her nymphlike lightness of movement carried her everywhere like a wind filling many places at once.' She delighted in playing with her contemporaries at St. Cyr, and in joining the devotions there. There was a strong religious element in her, but there was also a vehement love of amusement and excitement, which often grieved and displeased her grave young husband, who had attained self-control by such strong efforts that he could not approve her undisciplined nature, and there were many quarrels in consequence which Madame de Maintenon had always to compose. The sister of this bright fitful young creature, Maria Louisa, though only fourteen, was at once selected as the future Queen of Spain, and, as soon as possible, Louis sent off his grandson, with the parting words, 'Henceforth there are no more Pyrenees.'

Louis had written with his own hand to his brother potentates to explain the situation in which the will had placed him. William III., when the French ambassador proceeded to dwell on these excuses, said,—

'Sir, you need not trouble yourself to justify your master's conduct. The most Christian King could not be unlike himself—he has acted as usual.'

William was much vexed that the nation did not see the matter as he did. They would not, like him, identify Louis' grandson with himself, and preferred that the Two Sicilies should still be nominally Spanish to their passing entirely into French hands; and, even in Holland, he found unwilling support, for the nation was worn out with war. As to Leopold, he declared that the will was an imposture, and gave orders that the Milanese territory should be occupied, as this was indisputably a fief of the Empire.

Further to intimidate the Dutch, and cut them off from Austria, Louis, though it was in full time of peace, caused all their garrisons to be seized which, by treaty with Spain, were in Namur, Luxemburg, Mons, Charleroi, Oudenarde, Nieuport, Ostend, Ath, and Bruges. All without notice were occupied by French troops and their Dutch garrisons made prisoners, but he allowed these afterwards to return to their homes, while he sent the Count d'Avaux to negotiate. Marshal Boufflers was sent to the Netherlands, where the Elector of Bavaria was Viceroy for the King of Spain It was thought that he would take part with his brother-in-law, the Archduke Charles, in consideration for his own dukedom of Bavaria; but he was an indolent, dissipated man, and liked Brussels better than Munich; so he accepted Philip V., and so did his brother Clement, the Electoral Archbishop of Cologne. Boufflers found the whole country neglected, only 10,000 men in the army, without stores or horses, and all the arsenals empty, the fortifications out of repair. The Dutch were, however, enough alarmed to submit to Louis' infraction of the treaty, and William, knowing how long it would take to prepare, and for the time unable to reckon on either English or Dutch, made a sort of acknowledgment of Philip as King of Spain. Young Philip V., who had parted for ever from his two brothers on the frontier, in the meantime entered Madrid in such state as Spanish resources could muster for the monarchy, but only in a very shabby old coach of the late King; for, in spite of all the vast riches of the American colonies, the mismanagement had been such that money was entirely wanting. The defences had dwindled down to nothing, the army in Spain, the Two Sicilies, Milan, Sardinia and the Netherlands only amounted to 20,000 men, and to these every requisite was wanting. The fortresses were out of repair, the cannon unmounted, there were no stores, no ship-building, there were six worn-out old galleys in the Bay of Carthagena, and a few hired from the Genoese. 'Comparing this state of things with that left by the Emperor Charles V., we might almost suppose that his descendants had been labouring to destroy the monarchy instead of to preserve it,' said Torcy, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The taxes were already so high that they were not paid, and, when the French advisers wished to impose more, Cardinal Puerto Carrero prevented this, as certain to cause an insurrection, though he cut down as much as possible the useless expenses of the royal household and curtailed numerous offices with their pensions, thus inevitably giving offence, but not so widely as fresh imposts would have done.

Louis XIV. had been anxious to prevent jealousy of the foreigner, and had only allowed three French nobles, one of whom was the ambassador Harcourt, to accompany his grandson across the Pyrenees; but Puerto Carrero found his own countrymen so unfit to assist him that he invited French advisers. To arrange the finances, Torcy sent him a man named Orry, who had been a clerk in some office in France, and afterwards steward to the Duchess of Portsmouth, by whom he had been dismissed for fraud; but, though not an estimable character, he showed himself very useful, and set matters on a better footing. Harcourt had to resign the embassy from ill-health, and his successor Count Marsin, though a good and upright man, was ignorant of Spanish affairs, and contemptuous of the nobles. However, he was dismayed at the influx of French adventurers, male and female, who flocked to Madrid just as the Scots had crowded after James I., into London, and he even tried to send home all who had not some settled profession or occupation.

War in the Milanese had actually begun between Leopold and the French, and Louis now showed his chief object, calling on Marsin to demand of young Philip, in compensation for the great expenses that support of his throne would entail, the cession of the Spanish Netherlands to France. Marsin, however, wrote back that this would so entirely alienate the Spanish nation that nothing could be more dangerous; so there only remained a secret understanding, and indeed, as an ally and protector, Louis continued to occupy those cities with his troops, as indeed Flanders was ever his Naboth's vineyard.

The young King had gracious and graceful manners, but he was both timid and indolent, and he had learnt in France to dread the meeting of national assemblies, so that he was willing to put off as long as possible the meeting with the Cortes of Castille, and therefore deferred it until he should have met his bride Maria Louisa of Savoy in Catalonia.

He set out for Zaragoza in September and was well received there; but Catalonia showed itself less amiable, having had a German Viceroy, George of Hesse Darmstadt who had been very popular, but whom Puerto Carrero had removed. He had declared that he would return and bring back another King of Spain, and the promise had not been forgotten.

At Figueras Philip met his bride, and found her quite as charming as her sister. She was only fourteen, but very precocious, and with great sweetness and sprightliness, so that she won all hearts. Louis had provided her with a Camerera Mayor or chief lady of the bed-chamber, who was a friend of Madame de Maintenon, and as he hoped would influence her as that lady did the Duchess of Burgundy, and who was eligible as the widow of a Spanish grandee, though French by birth. She was Anne Marie de la Tremouille, daughter of the Duke of Noirmoutiers. Her first husband had been one of the Talleyrand family, who had been exiled, and she had therefore spent some years in Spain with him. After his death she had married Flavio di Orsini, head of the great Roman house, and, as Duke of Bracciano, a peer of Spain. He was now dead, but her breeding, at once French, Spanish, and Italian, eminently fitted her for ingratiating herself with a Savoyard queen, wife to a French King of Spain. She is generally known, by the French corruption of her title, as Princesse des Ursins, and she was extremely fascinating, as brilliant a letter-writer as Madame de Maintenon, but much more ambitious and intriguing and without the same strong conscientiousness and sense of religion. The young Queen was as much enchanted with her as the King was enchanted with the Queen, and her dominion over both was soon established.

After obtaining a scanty contribution from the Cortes of Catalonia at Barcelona, Philip appointed his Queen Regent and authorised her to hold the Cortes of Arragon, while he embarked for Naples. He was not liked there, and the Pope, Clement XI., refused him investiture with the realms still viewed as fiefs of the Church. Still the year 1701 saw the young Bourbon in full possession, his power not yet formally disputed by any one except the Emperor Leopold.

But the minds of the English were never altered. The faculties of James II. were decaying, and he gradually fell into a lethargic state whence it was difficult to arouse him, and the violent bleeding which he had had at Salisbury recurred, not, however, preventing apoplectic fits. When dying, he said he was in charity with all, and that he forgave his daughter and nephew with all his heart. He had long lived in the practice of severe penance, even wearing an iron belt, like his ancestor, so that it may be hoped that his repentance was sincere for the many heavy sins of his life, sins condemned by his own chosen Church. He had answered Anne's letter of penitence by commending the interests of her brother to her, and he placed his wife and children under the protection of his firm friend, Louis XIV. He received the last Sacraments from the parish priest of St. Germain's, and manifested much piety and resignation as he gradually sank and died on the 16th of September, 1701.

He had begged to be buried quietly at St. Germain's like a private gentleman, but Louis XIV. said this was the only thing he could not grant; so he was embalmed, and his body placed in the English Benedictine convent at Paris to wait for a restoration. His heart was given to the nuns at Chaillot, his brains to the Scotch college at Paris, and St. Germain's and St. Omer divided the remainder! So ended the last of the eleven sovereigns peculiarly marked by misfortune.

Louis, no doubt convinced that war was inevitable, at once acknowledged the young James Edward as King of England, and thus so mortally offended the whole of the English who did not believe in 'the Pretender's' birth, that they were quite as ready for war with France as William could desire.

Trusting to this feeling, he dissolved his Parliament, and the new one, which met in December, 1701, showed itself absolutely resolved to oppose the succession of the Pretender Prince of Wales, issuing a harmless bill of attainder against that youth, and accepting all the engagements made by the King to the House of Austria. The Commons freely granted supplies for the Army and Navy, to be made up by a land and income tax of four shillings in the pound, a capitation tax likewise of four shillings to be paid by all persons not servants or day labourers, and a malt tax.

Never had William had such support in his attack on his old enemy, but he was not destined to avail himself of it. He was suffering more than usual that winter from his asthma, his legs swelled, and he told Lord Portland in confidence that he doubted whether he should live to the end of 1701, but charged his friend not to mention this lest the war should be prevented. He remained as much as possible at Hampton Court, where he was causing canals in the Dutch taste to be dug. On the morning of the 21st of February, 1702, he was riding on a pony called Sorrel, which had belonged to Sir John Fenwick, surveying the work, as the more circumstantial accounts say, though others declare that he was returning from hunting, when the pony trod into one of the numerous mole-hills, and fell first on his knees, and then over on one side, so that the King fell with his right shoulder undermost.

The workmen raised him, and helped him to the palace, where he declared his hurts to be trifling, and, though his surgeon Ronjat found that his collar-bone was broken, he would not defer going to Kensington as soon as it was set. The jolting of the wintry roads displaced the setting, so that he was in a state of great pain and exhaustion when he arrived. On the 1st of March spasmodic cramp came on, but he lingered for a week, his breath growing shorter every minute. He would not see Princess Anne, but Archbishop Tenison and Bishop Burnet were constantly praying by him, and he received the Holy Communion. He was kept up by stimulants, and showed much anxiety for the arrival of his two early friends, Albemarle and Portland, the former of whom had been on a mission to Holland, and was hurried to the sick-chamber in travelling guise; but by that time the King could hardly speak, though he seemed to listen to the account of the military preparations, but murmured only, '*Je tire vers ma fin*,' then held the hand of Portland till the last—at 8 A.M. on Sunday, the 8th of March.

He was in his fifty-first year, and his life had been one long struggle with ill-health, though the final cause of his death was 'the little gentleman in the black velvet coat,' whose health the Jacobites were apt to drink.

Bishop Burnet hurried off with the tidings to St. James's Palace to Princess Anne, and one courtier after another followed. Among them came Lord Clarendon, but Anne sent him word that she would be happy to see him only if he took the oaths to her. 'No,' he said, 'I come to talk to my niece, I shall take no other oaths than those I have taken.'

He was therefore excluded; but there were many Tories who felt that the death of James to whom their oaths had been given released them so that they could acknowledge his daughter, and Anne was a popular queen with both parties. She was thirty-eight years old, and had a good deal of matronly dignity and royal grace. Her voice was naturally a very sweet one, and had, by desire of Charles II., been trained by the actress, Mrs. Betterton, so that her utterance on all public occasions made the speeches that had been composed for her affect the audience in a wonderful way, 'a sort of charm,' as Speaker Onslow expressed it. She was a kind-hearted if a weak woman, uneducated and vulgar in taste, but conscientious and religious, and strongly attached to the Church. She was very anxious to restore Bishop Ken, offering to promote the intruding Bishop Kidder to Carlisle, and to bring him back to Bath and Wells, and even to be crowned by him; but, though he felt free to swear allegiance to her, he would not abjure her brother, according to the oath required, and thus the arrangement fell to the ground, and he continued in his obscurity.

Anne was a most affectionate wife, but Prince George of Denmark was such an absolute nonentity, though a man of huge stature and proportions, that he did not in the least disturb the sway exercised over her by the Countess of Marlborough, and through her by the Earl. They were the real arrangers of her Cabinet and of her policy, and with them were Lord Godolphin and Robert Harley, Secretary of State, Godolphin was Lord High Treasurer, in which capacity he had proved his capacity. The eldest daughter of Marlborough, Henrietta, was married to the eldest son of this nobleman, and was a lady of the bedchamber, as well as her sister, the wife of Lord Sunderland's son. Anne considered these all as Tories, though they were nearly indifferent as to the principle of party; and Marlborough was far too great a captain not to be fired by the hope of campaigns where his genius would be free to act, untrammelled by the cautious and distrustful William; and the policy of the late King was decided upon in Council, and the preparations for war continued. There was at this time no idea of taking the whole ministry from one party, so as to act harmoniously and stand by one another. Each was only the secretary of the monarch, and they might be of as different opinions as possible; and thus Lord Rochester, now Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, was a far stronger Tory than his colleagues.

Anne was crowned on St. George's Day, 1702, the anniversary of her father's coronation. Her husband preceded her in the procession, and her train was borne by the premier peeress, the Duchess of Somerset, assisted by her daughter, Lady Elizabeth Seymour, by the Queen's first cousin, Lady Mary Hyde, daughter of the Earl of Rochester, and by Lady Mary Pierrepoint, then only fifteen, but whose beauty had been a toast at thirteen, and who afterwards became famous as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.

All was according to the ritual as altered for William, and Anne afterwards presided at the banquet, which was not over till half-past eight at night. Her coronation medal bears a crowned heart, encircled with oak leaves, and the legend, 'Entirely English,' words which had occurred in her first speech to her Parliament.

In spite of natures that can only be designated as vulgar, Anne and her beloved Sarah of Marlborough were both loving and faithful wives, and hated vice and immorality enough to produce a certain improvement, though coarseness was far from being eradicated; and, in the earlier years of her reign, hardly any stand had been made against it. Taste in all respects had fallen very low. Dryden, a poet spoilt by evil times, was passing away, and his contemporaries were inferior; comedy, such as was then written, took grossness for wit, and there was hardly any superior tragedy. The greatest literary figure was Jonathan Swift, born in Ireland though not of Irish extraction, who had been patronised by Sir William Temple, his distant relation, and lived in his family at Moor Park until his patron's death in 1699. There he wrote his 'Tale of a Tub,' a coarse, irreverent book, most unfit for the pen of a clergyman, but extremely clever and incisive, showing how legacies were left by a father to his three sons, Peter the Romish Church, Jack the Dissenters, Martin the English Church. The book was not published for a good many years, and Swift was chiefly at Dublin as chaplain to Lord Berkeley. The other great writers, whose performances caused

Anne's reign to be called an Augustan age of literature in England, had not yet come to the front.

The greatest man in his own line was Isaac Newton. Galileo and Kepler had already marked out the main facts of the solar system; and it was Newton, a Cambridge scholar, who in his home at Woolthorpe was demonstrating the truth of what others had surmised, that gravitation was that which accounted for the balance of the heavenly bodies, and their mutual attraction. In fact, as it was admirably expressed by Samuel Rogers—

'The very law that moulds a tear
  And bids it trickle from its source,
That law preserves the earth a sphere,
  And guides the planets in their course.'

It was in the year 1666 that he first saw how to prove this to himself—as we all have heard by working out what was the principle upon which an apple fell from a tree in the garden. He was then only twenty-four, and he was so much occupied with mathematical and chemical discoveries that he did not bring this forward for sixteen years. He was mathematical professor at Cambridge, and it was not till 1682 that he thoroughly worked out his discovery, and proceeded to make it known in his *Principia;* but it was long before the world fully awoke to the value of his theory, and when French astronomers awoke to it, and wondered at the neglect with which he was treated, Louis XIV. actually offered him a pension. However, his knowledge of chemicals was so useful in William's reform of the coinage, that he was made Master of the Mint. His greatness dawned on the English people, and he was knighted by Queen Anne at Cambridge. Altogether science had greatly advanced during the latter years of the seventeenth century, having then embarked in the steady progress that has never since slackened, though art and poetry were both at a low ebb.

One admirable reform was at once brought in by the queen, namely that no one at court should pay anything for his place. Every one was to take solemn oath to the contrary on being admitted, and extreme corruption was thus prevented. The pages of the back stairs had paid £1000, not to the Crown, but to the Groom of the Stole, and Lady Marlborough takes great credit to herself, as Mistress of the Robes, for dispensing with this profitable system. Avarice was the great failing of her husband, so that this change must have been felt severely; and, whether it emanated from her or not, it is to her credit that she allowed her dutiful 'Mrs. Morley' to carry it out. Indeed, Anne, with all her failings, was the most conscientious sovereign who had reigned since her grandfather, and a true Churchwoman. Those first-fruits of the tithes of all benefices which the Popes had appropriated, and which Henry VIII. and his successors had continued to receive, she restored to the Church, as a means of supplying the needs of poor livings, and they are known as Queen Anne's Bounty.

LECTURES ON CHURCH HISTORY GIVEN AT WINCHESTER.

BY THE EDITOR.

SECOND SERIES.

I.

THE ANCIENT BRITISH CHURCH.

THE Anglo-Saxon period is the subject for the coming winter; but I must begin a little further back, since it is not possible to comprehend the history of the conversion of Britain without knowing what was the condition of the Church in this country before the Mission of St. Augustine. The Celtic Church had so much to do, both with the making and the marring of English Christianity, that it must be dealt with first; though the materials are very insufficient and doubtful. The record begins, like every history, amid mists and clouds, and, like those of opening day, these are often as brightly coloured as they are unsubstantial. For verily it was a golden dream that illuminated the dawn of our Christianity with the wonderful myth of St. Joseph of Arimathea preaching in the Vale of Avallon or Caer Idris, and there planting the staff, which became the Glastonberry thorn, blossoming at Christmas. The hawthorn, bearing its white blossoms in December, actually flourishes at Glastonbury, and the tale probably arose to account for the fact; and at the same time the exquisite Chapel of St. Joseph, in its ruins, attests the belief of our Norman forefathers. They made those sunrise clouds assume still more brilliant and fantastic hues and forms, by linking therewith the wondrous old myth of the Cup, which, in their minds, became the Sanc Greal, the Chalice of the First Communion, brought to Avallon by St. Joseph, and only visible to the pure in heart. Other nations have told of the wonderful Cup, and of the heroic age of Arthur; but it is above all our own, where, from Mallory to Tennyson, the tale has become a beauteous and inspiring ideal of a golden age of chivalry, and of more than chivalry, not without a deep impression upon the national character.

Another far more credible, though unfortunately unproved, story rests on the greeting to Timothy sent in St. Paul's second Epistle to Pudens, Linus, and Claudia. What is certain is that Linus's name stands next to that of St. Peter in the succession of Popes. Also that Pudens was martyred under Nero, and that the house of his grandson of like name became the Church of St. Pudentiana, the oldest spot uninterruptedly set apart for Christian worship, and in its interior arrangements still showing its original purpose.

When classic literature came into fashion it was observed that the poet Martial, a contemporary of St. Paul, had several poems addressed to a certain Pudens and his wife, Claudia Rufina, sprung from the 'blue Britons,' and, though Pudens was apparently an Umbrian Centurion of habits not above those of heathen Rome, sanguine commentators identified them with the Pudens and Claudia of St. Paul. The Welsh name, Gladys, which has lately become a favourite, was supposed to be the same as hers.

Lastly, in 1723, there was discovered at Chichester a stone, now in a summer house at Goodwood, slightly broken, but bearing a Latin inscription, declaring that a temple to Neptune and Minerva is here dedicated by the Guild of Carpenters by permission of Tiberius Claudius Cogidumnus, King and Legate of Augustus, upon a space given by Pudens, the son of Pudentinus.

The first syllable of Pudens is broken off, but if anything is proved by the stone it is that he was a pagan when it was carved. However, these are the materials of what Dr. Farrar calls an elaborate rope of sand.

Claudia had at first been supposed to have been daughter to that noble Silurian chief, Caradoc or Caractacus, who lived in honourable captivity on the Mons Sacer, and who, on adoption as a Roman citizen, would naturally have assumed the Gentile name of the Emperor Claudius. She was, however, now transferred to Cogidumnus, and it was decided that she and her husband were converted after coming to Rome, and that Linus was the Latin version of the British name of their son Llyn.

Moreover, Aristobulus, also mentioned among the greetings in the last chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, is claimed as the next Apostle of Britain and the companion of the voyage to Rome by the Welsh bards, and said by them to have been brought thither by Bran the Blessed, the son of Caradoc.

Moreover, Lleuver Mawr, the Great Light, more conveniently known as Lucius, a grandson of Caradoc, is stated to have built the first Church at Llandaff, sent to Pope Eleutherius for missionaries, altered the religion of Britain from Druidism to Christianity, and changed his three arch-flamens and twenty-eight flamens into as many Archbishops and Bishops. Probably he was a real personage, but his rule could certainly have extended only over a small fraction of Wales. The authority for the mission is a life of Eleutherius, written in the sixth century, whence Bede copied it. Geoffrey of Monmouth says that Lucius was buried at Gloucester; but the Swiss at Coire imagine him to have died there, when returning on a pilgrimage to Rome, or, according to another version, to have preached the Gospel, and been there martyred.

All this we can only take as absolutely unproved, and most of it as incredible. All that can be reasonably accepted is the possibility of the identity of Pudens and Claudia, and that a Silurian chief applied for missionaries.

Rome had, as is well known, gradually subdued the southern part of the island, and made it a division of the great province of Gaul. There were five Vicariates—*Britannia Prima*, from the Channel to the Thames; *Flavia Cæsariensis*, from the Thames to the Humber; *Britannia Secunda*, westward from the Severn; *Maxima Cæsariensis*, from the Humber to the Tyne, and the Wall of Hadrian; and *Valentia*, the country between Hadrian's Wall and that of Antoninus between the Forth and Clyde. Beyond lay the unconquered Caledonia, inhabited by a people whom the Romans called Picti, and who were of the same race as the Britons.

The Scots as yet still inhabited Ireland, on which the Romans had as yet made no attempt. These lands were by no means as thoroughly Romanised as were Gaul and Spain. There were colonies and camps; indeed, the surviving *chester* or castrum testifies to the occupation having been chiefly military, connected by the roads that the Roman armies never failed to construct, and near which there were villas with their elaborate pavements and baths. As in the other conquered countries, the chiefs of the tribes were permitted to exercise their hereditary power, and were admitted as Roman citizens, receiving, if they chose, a Latin education. The cities were as much as possible fashioned like Rome, London, Verulam, and Eboracum being the chief of these. Nor did our own White City, Caer Gwent, Venta Belgarum, or Winchester, hold a mean rank, though perpetual habitation has obliterated most of the remains, and our best relics are at Silchester.

Of Druidism I will say nothing, for two reasons, one that it has nothing to do with the year's subject; the other, that whatever one learns about it is contradicted by the next authority on the subject. Whatever it amounted to, it was pretty well exterminated; but, on the other hand, Roman Christian remains are very scanty, and the stations along the great Roman Wall certainly had heathen altars.

Still there were Christians in Britain by the third century, but the chief martyr of the British Church under Diocletian was, judging by his name and profession, a Roman. There seems no reason to doubt the story of Alban, the soldier, sheltering the fugitive priest, being converted by him, and giving himself up in the priestly garment to favour his friend's escape, and confessing himself a Christian. Bede joins to this the miracle of the stream Ver drying up before him, on his way to his martyrdom, and of a well bursting out on the spot where he was beheaded, probably the place called Holy Well. The magnificent St. Alban's abbey in later times absorbed the old name Verulam, and, in our own day, its church has become a cathedral. In the twelfth century, the monks of St. Alban's forged some acts of their Saint, in which they called the priest whom he saved Amphiballus, from the Greek name of his cloak, and invented a further story and a martyrdom for him.

Two citizens of Caerleon on Usk, named Aaron and Julius, are spoken of by Bede as martyrs; and these are all the British Church can enumerate, as Constantius Chlorus prevented persecution whenever he had the power. Unfortunately, the idea that Helena, his first wife, and mother of Constantine the Great, was the daughter of King Coel of Colchester, must be dismissed as another pleasing delusion, not older than the eleventh century. She was well known to be the daughter of a keeper of stables in Bithynia.

However, with the proclamation of '*In hoc signo vinces*,' the Christianity, which had smouldered in Britain, began to shed a freer light. There is little doubt that it had been derived through Gaul, where Trophimus the Ephesian and Irenæus kept up a connection with the Churches of Asia Minor, and the liturgy was said to be Ephesian, or of St. John. However, whatever there may have been developed in Britain, was so swept away that we have to gather our knowledge of what the Church must have been from the usages and remnants in Cornwall, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. Of material remnants we may mention part of the wall of St. Martin's Church at Canterbury, which apparently was a Roman villa, converted into a place of worship, and likewise part of the building now used as the garrison church at Dover. This is connected with the pharos, a circular building undoubtedly Roman, and a little window in the west end of the church is so arranged that the sentry who had charge of the light in the light-house could look across, and see whether the altar candles were burning.

Three British Bishops were present at a great Synod of the Western Church held at Arles in Provence for the condemnation of the Donatists, who had formed a schism, under the African Bishop Donatus, by objecting to the validity of the consecration of Cæcilianus, Bishop of Carthage. This was in 314, and the acts are signed by Eborius of York Restitutus of London, and Adelfins of Colonia Legionensum at Lindensium, this last word leaving it in doubt whether the see was Lincoln or Caerleon on Usk. At any rate, since London, in the midst of its marshes, seems never to have been actually conquered by the Saxons, and is probably the only ancient European capital never taken by siege, it can claim an unbroken Christianity. British Bishops were likewise at the Council of Sardica in 347, and of Ariminium in 360.

Maximus, that general who after the death of Valentinian was invested with the purple, and reigned for some years over Britain, Gaul, and Spain, married Helena, the daughter of the chief of Caer Fegons, namely, Caernarvon. As both Maximus and Helena were orthodox Christians, it is possible that this Empress may have been confused with the mother of Constantine. Maximus fell before

Theodosius, and Britain returned to the central power for a short time. The Britons under Roman power still retained their clanship, like all the Celts, and each chieftain was a little king, but with the Roman Government over him, carried on in the cities. In these there is reason to think the usual custom would be followed of a missionary Bishop preaching, baptising, ordaining, and, in due time, a Church being established, with a Bishop of a diocese, originally so named from the civil jurisdiction.

In the country, however, either the chieftain obtained a Bishop for his tribe, or the light emanated from some hermit, who settled in some cave or by some river-side, and gathered the peasants round him by his wisdom and aid, often, at first, to their bodily needs. Other Christians joined him, and the hermitage became a missionary college, and gradually an abbey. In these the Abbot seems to have been the ruler, though only a priest. The Bishops were more like missioners, who had their headquarters there, and, indeed, had not always definite dioceses.

Bangor in Flintshire was the most noted of these colleges. The name is said to mean the High Choir, and there the Latin ecclesiastical learning was taught to a number of pupils, many of whom became distinguished missionaries. One heretic of note seems, however, to have begun life there, namely, Morgan, Man of the Sea, or, as he translated his name into Greek, Pelagius. He lived at Rome with a friend called Cælestius in the beginning of the fifth century, promulgating a very serious heresy, namely, that Adam had been created subject to death, and that he had left no taint to his posterity, so that there was no original sin, and no need of redemption, nor of grace. When the Goths threatened Rome, the two friends took refuge in Sicily, and thence went to Africa, whence Pelagius travelled to Palestine, leaving Cælestius at Carthage, where he presented himself for Ordination; but the Bishop Aurelius was informed against him, and, assembling several Bishops, condemned the doctrine. Cælestius appealed to Rome, but travelled to Ephesus; and a magistrate of Carthage, writing to consult the great St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, called forth the beginning of the long series of controversial letters which had a great influence on after thought, and on which were in great measure based those doctrines of the absence of free-will on man's part, of extreme corruption of human nature, and of election by Divine Grace, which were so rigidly taught by the Calvinists, and of which the Jansenists were afterwards accused. To reconcile the facts of God's fore-knowledge and man's free-will is beyond human intellect, and St. Augustine, with all his greatness, left seeds of mischief by over-explaining in the heat of argument.

In St. Jerome, Pelagius found an equally strong and still fiercer opponent, who went so far as to attack his personal character, whereas Augustine had always respected this. Orosius, a young

Spanish priest just arrived from Africa, arraigned Pelagius for heresy before John, Bishop of Jerusalem, and read one of Augustine's letters before the local Synod.

'What is Augustine to me?' exclaimed the fiery Celt.

'You deserve to be excommunicated for thus speaking of the great prop of African unity,' was the answer.

The Bishop was, however, inclined to favour Pelagius, and as Orosius could not speak Greek, and had a bad interpreter, there was a good deal of confusion, and he failed to establish his case either there or at the subsequent Synod of Diospolis, as Lydda was called. However, Pelagius's doctrine was condemned, he abjured it, and was absolved; but he had by no means given it up, and at Rome he even persuaded Pope Zosimus to take his part. In a letter to the African Bishops, Zosimus blamed them for listening to false accusations, and declared that Pelagius and Cælestius had never been separated from Catholic truth! However, they met at Carthage, confirmed their decision, and censured the credulity of the Pope.

Moreover, the Emperor Honorius forebade Pelagius and Cælestius to be received at Rome. The Pope reconsidered his decision, and there was a general condemnation of Pelagius, whose end is not known; but the whole history is memorable, both as showing the fallibility of a Pope and the independence of the African Church, and as causing those utterances of St. Augustine, which led to so much later controversy.

In his own island, the doctrines of Pelagius had found favour, and the Gallic Bishops decided on sending two of their number, St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus, Bishop of Troyes, to confute them, and strengthen the kindred Churches.

Germanus was a very remarkable man of strong character—born of noble parents, the chief personages in his native city of Auxerre. Even in Christian Gaul, there lingered the custom of hanging the head and horns of deer slain in the chase on a stately pear-tree, once consecrated to Pagan deities; Germanus, an ardent huntsman, followed the custom till the aged Bishop Amator cut down the tree. The youth threatened furiously, but thought better of it afterwards, and, when Amator considered of a successor to himself, he decided that no one would be so good a protector for the flock, in the midst of the attacks of the Franks, as the high-spirited young chief.

Those to whom the proposal was made were delighted; and when Germanus least expected it he was seized in the streets and dragged into Church, where, in spite of his struggles, his secular dress was plucked off by the Bishop, he was forced upon his knees, and ordained a priest.

And though so strangely pressed into the service, his after life was from the first that of a saintly ecclesiastic; and, so high did he stand in estimation for learning and zeal, that he was sent with Lupus to recall the Britons from Pelagianism. It was a time of struggle and distress in Britain, when the Roman forces had been withdrawn, and the country was a prey to invaders from the north and west. Germanus seems to have excited the patriotism of the race, as well as to have confirmed their orthodoxy, for on the tidings of an attack by the Picts, who were constantly making forays, the men of North Wales rallied to resist them. Germanus taught his recruits, and converted many from heathenism. Their baptism on Easter Day had just taken place when the enemy came in sight; Germanus led the shout of Alleluia, which burst forth from the white-robed neophytes, and was taken up by all the army. Even as in the valley of Berachah of old, the enemy were struck as at a supernatural sight and sound, and fled in utter confusion, while the Britons gave joyous thanks for their deliverance.

This Alleluia victory is believed to have taken place at Maes Garmon, the stone of Germain near Mold, in Flintshire.

There are difficulties about it, for Welsh historians do not mention it; and it stands on the authority of Bede, who took the story from Constantius, an almost contemporary priest of Lyons. It was far south, too, for a Pictish incursion; but, on the word of 'The Groans of the Britons,' the Barbarians drove the people even to the sea. It is more puzzling that Saxons are coupled in the story with the Picts, though it is possible that the enemy may have been a mixed company of straggling marauders, since they were so easily scared.

SKETCHES OF OLD NORSE LITERATURE.

I.

INTRODUCTION.

It is sometimes asserted that modern literature is now more than enough to absorb the attention of students, and that the study of old writers and of languages not immediately useful is little better than waste of time. However, our university authorities still maintain that the philosophical study of even a modern language requires some knowledge of its earlier forms, and hence they have named Icelandic as an alternate language with Old High German for the Modern Language Tripos examinations. Those students who choose to go deeper into Icelandic, otherwise old Norse, literature than is required for a pass, will soon discover for themselves its extraordinary vitality and interest. It is unique as dating from the ninth century or earlier, and yet preserved in a still living language, and it throws a vivid light on the history of the earlier middle ages, and the forces which were then forming the modern world. We hope in these Papers to give some idea of its nature and extent, and of its relation to our own country and present modes of thought.

Only of late years have English writers given much attention to the history of Scandinavia; and this is but natural, as even in Iceland the old literature seems to have been quite neglected and almost forgotten from the fifteenth to the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Our standard historians down to Macaulay have followed in the lines laid down by the monastic chronicles, which were their guides through the early middle ages, and represent the heathen Northmen only as they appeared to the more timid inhabitants of the lands exposed to their attacks. For instance, in an essay on the Danes written for the jubilee edition of King Alfred's works so late as 1852, the author says that 'they were entirely ignorant of the arts of peace—warriors, but with no legislator or politician among them. Of ornaments entirely devoid, except such gained by piracy. They employed none but slaves, freedmen, women and old men in handicraft trades and domestic services.' The old Danish language is described as having a great similarity with the Welsh (!) and bas-Breton, and he considers 'it must have been rude and barren and wholly unfitted to express subtle or abstruse ideas.'

Any one who had studied the subject at all would now probably reply that, on the contrary, the Scandinavians were then much occupied about law and politics; that they were excellent metal smiths, and counted no labour derogatory to a freeman; and that the language belonged to the Teutonic, not the Celtic group, and is more like English than is any other foreign tongue; and also that at the beginning of its literature it was already a fine literary medium.

Within the last thirty years the works of various scholars, such as Worsae, Laing, Dasent, Vigfusson and others, have greatly altered the popular idea of the Northmen by showing them as they really were, chiefly by means of translations from their own old literature. We can realise that, though they were the terror of our coasts and bracketed in old litanies with pestilence and famine, they were on the whole a law-abiding people at home, and excelled the Saxons and Franks and Gaels they conquered in many things besides fighting.

Quite lately a tendency seems to have arisen to over-rate their civilisation and influence; witness the American author Du Chaillu's 'Viking Age,' published the other day, which though full of information and interesting illustrations, seems in some respects the work of an enthusiast, anxious to prove certain theories by indiscriminate quotations from all sorts of authorities, valuable or otherwise. One of his theories is that the Romans were mistaken in giving the name of Saxons and Franks to the maritime tribes who attacked their shores, and who were really Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians.

'They,' he says, 'not the German Saxons, were the ancestors of the English-speaking race, and in the glorious inheritance which they have left to their descendants scattered over the world we recognise many of the same traits of character which their ancestors possessed.'* The Americans are said to be delighted to claim the Northmen rather than the abolished Anglo-Saxons as their ancestors, though their gratification may be toned down by another theorist, who also believes Scandinavia to be the factory of nations, 'whence the noblest races swarmed southward,' but adds, 'The process still continues, always too it is the Aryan's fate to succumb in conquering. Only in the Scandinavian north does he retain his pristine vigour.' 'The further from the Baltic shores the less stable the race becomes,' though 'in Denmark and Britain it best maintains itself—its capacity for successful acclimatation is small, immeasurably inferior for instance to the Jewish race.'†

Before those conjectures can be accepted as history the philologists and Anglo-Saxon historians will have something to say; meanwhile, returning to more proven ground, we may remark as the special character of the northern emigration that, while the barbarians who destroyed the Roman Empire swarmed down on the civilised nations by land, the Norsemen had to cross a stormy sea. It follows that they were expert shipbuilders, as the remains of their vessels are here to prove, and that in itself marks great advance in several of the useful arts. Nor were all their expeditions warlike; they were the great carrying traders of the time, and it was constantly a question whether a Norse young gentlemen should fit out a warship or a merchant ship for his southern cruise. Those of them that settled in the lands they invaded soon, from their national respect for law, became the most orderly of the population. Multitudes colonised waste lands; they formed the bulk of the population in Orkney and Shetland, and largely peopled the west highlands and islands, and Ireland. So that the Viking expeditions probably did as much good as harm even in their immediate consequences, and the Viking himself was more than the fierce barbarian of the monastic histories. Let us take from the Norse Chronicle an ordinary instance of the home life of a Viking. Erling Skjalgason, a great bonde or yeoman—living in *circa* A.D. 1000, is described as the 'handsomest and strongest of men—a man of understanding in all he undertook, and a deadly man-at-arms.'

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* 'The Viking Age,' Du Chaillu.

† 'Home of the Aryans,' Rendall.

'He never went to sea with less than a fully manned ship of twenty benches of rowers. He had also a ship of thirty-two benches of rowers, very large for that size, which he used for Viking cruises, and in it were at least two hundred men.' He had always thirty slaves, who besides their allotted work had leisure time to work out their freedom, which they usually did within three years. He showed some how to work the herring-fishery, some useful handiwork, some helped to clear waste lands. 'He helped all to prosperity.' 'Erling was often out in summer on plundering expeditions, and procured for himself means of living.' He could hardly have been so popular abroad as at home. Such another was Egil, the Icelandic gentleman-farmer, when as a young man restlessly urging his father to fit him out a ship for a Viking cruise, the old man replies, 'The saying goes, happy is he who leads the harvest-cart at home, but I suppose you must guide yourself.' Egil's friend Arinbjorn is described as a man of noble disposition, kindly as brave, courteous even to insolent adversaries, liberal to the point of giving away his treasures to atone for what he considered a failure of national justice, and faithful in friendship to self-sacrifice; yet this ideal hero of the north goes yearly out in his 'three well-equipped warships to collect property' abroad —a euphemism for plundering. He goes where he chooses and takes what he likes, so it be not in Norway. No thought of the unhappy farmer abroad whose harvest-cart was to be plundered seems to trouble any one till we come to St. Olaf, who urges as a reason for taking the kingdom, 'that during a long sojourn abroad he and his men had only for support what they took in war, for which we have hazarded both life and soul; for many an innocent man have we deprived of his property and some of their lives.' The fact was that, until Christianity had got a firm hold of the Norsemen, all foreigners were counted outside the tribal obligations of law and justice; their countries were considered *out*-lands as much removed from the protection of the law as the realm of Utgard Loki from the peace of Asgard.

We may well ask why such men as Erling with his 'at least two hundred men,' or Arinbjorn with his three ships, should have carried all before them when attacking the people of the south. They were not as we are when encountering barbarians; they had no advantage in weapons, no secrets of military skill. The answer must be that they were the stronger, purer race, needed to infuse fresh spirit and manliness into the comparatively exhausted populations of the south. They have bequeathed some of their high qualities to our mixed British race. The marked individualism combined with love of order which has kept us free and strong; the spirit of enterprise, and the familiarity with the sea which distinguish our nation, we can trace to the infusion of Norse blood and Norse influence on the national character.

The Northern emigration probably began in prehistoric times, while its history dates from the time of Charlemagne; and it ended with King Hakon's campaign in the Western Isles in the storms which pursued his scattered shipping to his last southern refuge in Orkney. The literature which is our subject was, roughly speaking, produced between those two last dates; viz., from Charlemagne's time to Hakon's, from the ninth to the close of the thirteenth century. It is the outcome of the free life and adventurous spirit of the people, and is stamped by their strong individuality. Every one knows that we owe both its production and its preservation largely to Iceland, which held to the northern nations the position that the *scriptorum* and library did to the medieval monastery. The Norsemen who, for various reasons, settled on the pastures of Iceland—some for love of peace, others because they had made too many enemies to be safe elsewhere, found much altered in their new circumstances: the trading vessel built abroad was a costly necessity, there was no wood to build the superfluous warship. The days were occupied with homely toil amid grand and awful scenery most exciting to the imagination. The winters were long and dark, and needed the pleasure or time-shortening (the equivalent Norse word) of the telling of stories and recitation of ancestral deeds. The winter nights gave the poet leisure for composition, and he could convert much of the intense energy which belonged to that period of *Sturm und Drang* into song and saga. Then it was the custom for the young poet to pass some years in Norway or Denmark, sometimes at the court of the king, or at other times wandering abroad in search of historical information or legends; and he would return to Iceland a master of his craft—able, that is, to improvise on any occasion; able to record historical events in long poems or eulogiums, and ready to teach his compositions to the younger skalds who learnt them by heart.

Thus a school of history and poetry was formed before writing was practised. Only late in the eleventh century the more learned began to write down this traditional lore as delivered by one generation to another. The structure of the poetry greatly aided the practised memory of the people, and facts were gathered out of the carefully preserved family histories which had also been committed to memory. It was the business of the president of the Icelandic republic to know the whole complicated code of laws by heart, so as to be a sure reference, hence he was called the Law Speaker. Thus this traditionary literature met the first writer not as a mere loose mass of vague memories, but as an orderly record of authoritative statements. Then came the high tide of original Icelandic written literature from the eleventh to the fourteenth century, at which latter date it became more like that of the rest of Europe. For by that time the Norse emigration had done its work; the weapon was no longer needed and was cast away. The passion for arms and strong independence of the people became a source of great trouble in all the northern lands; the dangerous classes instead of pervading Europe were shut up at home. The quarrels of men who would not submit to excellent laws distracted Iceland, till her best men were fain to subject their free republic to the Norwegian Crown.

Norway, also distracted by the same causes, lost the foremost and bravest of her people in the useless civil wars; the national energies and fire seemed exhausted, and the Northmen became for some centuries a population of farmers and fishermen; still intellectual and law-abiding, still socially free, but with no political life of their own, and with no part to play in the great drama of history. When, some time after the Reformation, the national life revived, the modern Danish and Swedish dialects had drifted far from the old language, which might now be called classical Norse, but which remains essentially the language of Iceland to this day.

In the Saga times it was called the Danish tongue, the word Danish then being applied not merely to modern Denmark but to all Scandinavia. A Dane in early English means a native of Scandinavia. About the fourteenth century the language is sometimes called Norse, as the intercourse between Norway and Iceland was close then. But from the fifteenth century the language on the Continent changed so much that the term Icelandic was used for the original form, and we hear of translations from it into Norse. Some peasant dialects in Norway and Sweden approach much nearer than the modern forms to the old language from which the present Danish is the widest departure. Icelandic has to be learnt in Denmark as a foreign language. The Norwegians, after long indifference, now so prize their old literature that some authors write in an archaic form; and they prefer to call their former language old Norse, which no doubt it was; but it is Icelandic, and gives to the remote island a peculiar, indeed unique interest.

As Icelandic literature varies much in character, it may be easier to consider it according to the nature of the compositions, rather than their often uncertain dates, by which arrangement it might be made to fall into four divisions—

1st. Early Mythic and Heroic Poems, without date and by unknown authors.

2nd. Poems and Eulogiums, generally by known authors, and recited before kings and great men—often the basis of history.

3rd. Historical Prose Literature, Chronicles and Biographies.

4th. The Sagas proper, or Icelandic family or local histories, true or partly true, partly fictitious like historical novels, but relating to daily life and real characters. These last Sagas are a form of literature peculiar to Iceland.

THE EAST LONDON MISSION TO THE JEWS.

We have, on a former occasion, given some account of the inception and progress of Mr. Rosenthal's East London Mission to the Jews. We have now the pleasant duty of recording its further progress and its prosperous development. The Rev. S. J. Stone, in his article on 'Church Work among the Jews,' in No. 61 of the *Monthly Packet*, mentioned that Mr. Rosenthal had baptised a hundred and five adult Jews besides children. The total number of baptisms is now about four hundred. Mr. Stone then mentioned that only the parish of St. Peter's, Eaton Square, gave any real encouragement to the Mission: but we are thankful to say that now many parishes and their Clergy do what they can in aid. At the earlier date there was only the Mission House in Haggerston. There is still a Mission House in the parish; but now a much larger one has been obtained in the Commercial Road, which is a kind of centre for the Jews of the East End, and adapted for various purposes. There is a whole machinery of good at work: Hebrew Sunday-schools, Bible classes, Mothers' meetings, Church services, with constant visitations of Jews—both converted and unconverted. There are a certain number of teachers for the Sunday-school, and lay-helpers, including ladies, who give kindly and efficient help for the work, and more of this kind of assistance is urgently required. Among other plans for good, there is a design for a Hebrew Orphanage, which is much wanted, and towards which some liberal contributions have been already made. The new Orphanage will be opened before the appearance of this article.

I have been a great deal of late among the small colony of converted Hebrews, witnessing the work that is being carried on for their behalf, and the behalf of their unconverted brethren. I will relate my experiences in order, as simply as I can. I first went to an evening service in the beautiful church of St. Augustine, Settle Street, Commercial Road. The population of this parish consists nearly one-half of Jews. The church was extremely well filled by a Hebrew congregation, most of whom were men. I have never seen in any London church so many young men assembled.

The whole of the service, the shortened evensong, the hymns, the sermon, were in the Hebrew tongue. The whole music sounded most musically in Hebrew.

Another day I attended one of the Bible-classes, which on this occasion was held in the large schoolroom of St. Paul's, Haggerston. This, too, was largely attended by young men; the scene was a very interesting one. I was reminded of what we read of in the Acts, how St. Paul disputed with the Jews, showing them, out of the Scriptures, that Jesus is Christ. These Jews, like the Berœans of old, 'were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so.' Missioner and Catechumens also had their Bibles in hand, and referred to one passage after another to verify the Lord's own words, 'Ought not Christ'—is it not the very idea and description of the Messiah, that He should first suffer these things, and then enter into His glory? I need hardly say that it is the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, which, beyond any other, brings conviction to the mind of the Jew, who is truly a candid inquirer. Very interesting also is the early Hebrew Celebration, which is frequently choral. Mr. Stone's hymn on the Conversion of the Jews, which appeared in the *Monthly Packet*, and is incorporated in the new edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 'Unchanging God, hear from Eternal Heaven,' is frequently sung on this and other occasions.

I am sorry to say that, as in the days of St. Paul, the unbelieving Jews throw every obstacle in the way of their converted brethren, even at the celebration of the Holy Sacrament. They wait for the converts in the approaches to the church, take count of those who communicate, endeavour to discourage them, and corrupt their faith. There is hardly any Celebration but we are told that there are four or five unfriendly witnesses, waiting in the street, or even within the church, who take notes of those who communicate, and turn the knowledge to hostile purposes.

The baptisms invariably held at St. Paul's, Haggerston, were frequently the scene of the most hostile demonstrations. It is always necessary to have the police on the spot. On one occasion, some years ago, nearly a thousand Jews assembled outside St. Paul's Church to prevent some baptisms, and the police and detectives had to be summoned in considerable force. This outward rancour has been considerably modified of late years, partly because the Jews feel themselves unable to cope with the law, and partly also, I would fain hope, because there is more patience towards those who abjure Judaism, and even some desire to know the reasons of the change. I have on several occasions been the preacher when some twenty Jewish adults have been baptised, men and women. I have been greatly impressed with their devout and reverent appearance. I know that the greatest pains have been taken with their preparation, more than is ordinarily taken with our own candidates for Confirmation. Their instruction frequently extends over some years, and the catechumens are often kept back that they may be better grounded in faith and practice. Baptism is always followed by Confirmation and the reception of the Holy Communion.

I spent nearly the whole day, some weeks ago, among the converted Jews at the anniversary of the Hebrew Guild of Intercession. The Church services consisted of Celebration, matins, and evensong. At the matins there were seventeen new members and associates; the total number of them is about 400, including several Bishops of the Anglican and American Churches. Mr. Rosenthal is the warden. At evensong there were baptisms, both of adults and of children. The Guild had a public breakfast in the schoolroom. The speaking on this occasion was strictly, and very properly, limited to Jewish converts. Some of these addresses were very good, plain, scriptural, and earnest; the men appeared to be very fairly educated and in good positions. One convert, a master carpenter, said that he preferred unconverted Jews to work for him, because, though he could not get so much work out of them as from his baptised brethren, yet this gave him the opportunity of attempting their conversion by declaring the Gospel to them. They freely related their own difficulties and experiences in coming out of Judaism into Christianity, and spoke of the rest and happiness which they enjoyed in the possession of the truth. It was very interesting to observe the feelings of affection which evidently existed between the converts and the missionary and each other. On this occasion the Hebrew communicants presented Mr. Rosenthal with a handsomely bound Bible and Prayer-book in Hebrew, 'the heavenly language,' as they called it.

I had not an opportunity of observing the Sunday-schools and the Mothers' meetings at work; but I saw them at their play, by which I mean a great holiday excursion. I understand that the mothers and children are chiefly drawn from the very poorest Jews. While there are none so rich as some Hebrews, there are none so poor as others. These mothers and children started one morning from Mr. Rosenthal's house to spend a summer day in Epping Forest. Each child had a bun and a cup of milk before starting, to fortify them for their expedition. There were nine van loads of people, about two hundred women and children; a large proportion of them seemed to be poor foreign Jews. I saw them all start, with every good and verified wish, in my mind, for a happy day.

Epping Forest is a great outlet for the overworked toilers of the East End, and there are glens and recesses there almost as still and remote as Canadian forests; the very recollection of such a holiday lasts them till the holiday comes again.

If any one wishes to see the full working of the East London Mission to the Jews, he cannot do better than go to the large Mission House, No. 87, Commercial Road, where he is sure to find a welcome. This institution is always at work in one way or another, and there are always on the spot those who will show everything to the visitor.

It will be worth our while carefully to examine this house from basement to attic. In the winter the basement partly serves the purposes of a kitchen. Here soup is prepared for the very poor Jews, who are congregated in immense numbers in this part of London. The pavement is partly asphalted, and serves as a gymnasium for young men. We ascend from this underground region to the ground-floor; this is entirely taken up by a large hall, which is licensed for public worship by the Bishop of London. The recess at the end forms the sanctuary. Here services are held, lectures, classes, meetings. Saturday, the Hebrew Sabbath, is the chief day for teaching; but something is going on most evenings of the week. We will now go upstairs. Part of the first floor has a reading-room, well furnished with periodicals, open to the Jews all day, which gives a resting-place to some of the 'tribe of the weary feet.' Here are the lodgings for two of the Hebrew lay-readers, who are always at hand to render service of any kind. Other rooms are fitted up as dormitories for homeless Jews, who, in consequence of their change of religion, may be suffering want and persecution.

The condition of these converts constitutes a large province of Mr. Rosenthal's work, and is perhaps the largest source of expenditure. When a Jew renounces Judaism he makes sacrifices of which we ordinary Christians, who, so to speak, have inherited Christianity as a birthright, can hardly form an adequate conception. He is at once cut off from all ties of family, religion, friendship, and business. His earnings are reduced from pounds to shillings; for a time, indeed, he is thrown out of employment altogether, especially in those trades which are almost entirely in the hands of Jews, and comes to the verge of starvation. Every effort is made to defame his character to prevent his obtaining fresh employment. Eventually, he recovers himself; fresh avenues of life open out to him; but in all human seeming, for the present time, he is ruined. What is to be done for the poor outcast Jew at such a time? There are some who speak rather grudgingly of the expense he causes; but the language of St. James leaves us no room for hesitation. Surely he is our brother, whom we must enable to tide over this difficult season. 'If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone (St. James ii. 16). Sometimes it is found necessary, in the stress of persecution, which is often more real than we can imagine, to send him out of the country; sometimes men or even families are assisted to emigrate. There were last year twenty-three converts and catechumens thus sent out; seventeen converts were helped to begin life anew; and one hundred and seventy catechumens were sheltered, clothed, and maintained, for some period more or less. Of course, in the case of converts of means and position, such as are won from time to time, nothing of this kind was required.

In the history of the Mission, it has sometimes been found that in showing this hospitality we have been entertaining angels unawares.

Some have become valuable missionaries abroad; some have been ordained at home; others are being prepared for ordination; many settle down as useful, hard-working, religious citizens, gradually absorbed in the mass of the Christian population. Even from a worldly point of view, the expenditure is justified by promoting the well-being of so many useful, industrious people, and consequently the general good of society, and the consideration is indefinitely heightened when we realise the charitable and religious aspect of the matter.

There are some further points of extreme interest connected with this Jewish movement. Every great movement in London has a far and widespreading influence. Jews come from all parts of the world to London, and from London again they migrate to all parts of the world. Many of these come within the range of Mr. Rosenthal's teaching, sometimes without effect, sometimes to mock and oppose, and often it is impossible to trace the results that have been produced; on the other hand, it is often possible to trace a very blessed result. The Missioner receives without surprise letters from many Jews in different parts of the world. The present writer has had the pleasure of inspecting and reading many such letters; they come from Moscow, Bagdad, Asia Minor, India, China, Australia, America, and other regions. A Jew and his wife, leaving London for the Antipodes, came from mere curiosity to one of the Hebrew lectures; both were unconvinced, and mocked, and the wife drew an insulting caricature. The teaching, nevertheless, found its way into their hearts, and they especially thought of it during a terrible storm in the Bay of Biscay. One day Mr. Rosenthal received a letter from South Australia—

'You will be surprised to receive a letter from one who is a perfect stranger to you. . . . We studied the New Testament carefully during the rest of the voyage. My wife and I thought it only due to you, after we had mocked and caricatured you, that I should write and let you know that your earnest and vehement address was not lost upon us. After we have been publicly initiated in the Christian Faith I hope to write to you again, as I wish to consult you, in what way I may most usefully employ my spare time in making known to our own people, of whom there are a great many in this place, the peace and hope I now enjoy, and which, I trust, by the grace of God, will grow larger and wider the more I understand the terms of the New Covenant.'

The Mission has proved a centre from which radiate various other agencies for the good of the Jews, and it is hoped and believed that as time goes on these will be still further multiplied. Two instances of this are given in the Report for last year. Thus there is a good work carried on in Sydney by a convert baptised in 1888, and a former lay-worker in the Mission. Letters received from Sydney speak in a very encouraging way of his work. Another of the converts, baptised at St. Paul's, Haggerston, is carrying on a prosperous work among the

Jews of Paris. The Report of the Paris Mission says: 'We thank God for sending us a most efficient Missionary Evangelist, Mr. ——, the son of a Russian Rabbi, and the Lord has greatly blessed his efforts, especially among young men. A great movement has taken place, several have been convinced of the truth as it is in Jesus, and we have had the joy of seeing them confess openly their faith in Christ by baptism.' So far as we have been enabled to trace the history of the converts, each as he goes away becomes a centre of usefulness and light in the circle to which he belongs. The Mission has had a measure of disappointments. There are some who have gone from us because they were not truly of us. A very few have fallen away; Mr. Rosenthal calculates about one per cent. of the whole. It is to be said, on the other hand, that in other parts of England, and of the world, many Jews are baptised who received their first religious instruction at Haggerston.

It is a remarkable fact that the conversion of Jews is mainly effected by Jews. Some writers hold that this is invariably the case without exception. Without going quite so far as this, it seems to be the ordinary rule that the Jew must be converted by the Jew. It seems to be another remarkable fact, so far as estimates can be formed by historians, that the population of Jews ever since the time of the destruction of Jerusalem has never greatly varied, the number being supposed to be about ten millions. Though war, exile, persecution, and famine have threatened to decimate or even destroy them, the elasticity of the race ensures their survival. Where the general population thins the race does not decline, and, where it increases, it does not similarly extend. A loss in one direction is balanced by progress in another. As the general mass of Jews can only be affected by their converted countrymen, what an immense importance belongs to such an effort as that of the East London Mission!

And not only is the conversion of the Jews to be effected by Jews, but also the conversion of the world is to be effected by them. It seems clearly laid down in Holy Writ that the Jews are to be the great missionaries of the future. At present the rate of missionary progress is unquestionably slow. Great things, indeed, have been achieved by missionary work among the heathen, and we hope and believe that still greater results are to be obtained; but the work done bears little proportion to the work that remains to be done. What we do is only a peppercorn rent in proportion to what the Church has to do. We have infringed on the circle of darkness, but we have hardly done more. We can now take a survey of the whole field of possible missionary exertion, and can see that, while something has been done, very much more remains to be done.

In no real sense can it be said that the Gospel has been preached to all nations; yet the Gospel must be so preached if the earth is to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

We believe that this is the great work in store for the converted Jews. The story is told of a meeting between two worthy clergymen, who were secretaries for two great Societies, the one for the conversion of Jews and the other for the conversion of the heathen. There was a little natural and not unamiable rivalry between them. 'My dear brother,' said the secretary of the Missionary Society, 'do be reasonable. Ten millions of Jews, a thousand millions of heathen; which Society has the strongest claim?' 'But, my dear brother,' replied the advocate for the Jews, 'suppose these thousand millions of heathen are to be reached by the agency of the ten millions of Jews.' And this we believe will be the case. St. Paul says: 'Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? . . . If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?' The Gospel must be preached to all nations, but it must be now, as at the first, 'beginning at Jerusalem.' The great Duke of Wellington once said to some clergymen, when speaking of this text: 'You see your marching orders, gentlemen.' The duty of the Christian Church is defined by its Head, that the Gospel should be preached to the Jews first, and after to the Gentiles. St. Paul is the great typical missionary, and nowhere are his love, fervour, and devotion more manifest than among his fallen brethren, beloved for the fathers' sake. Now imagine thousands of Jews converted to the Saviour, with something of the Apostolic energy and love of St. Paul. Speaking all languages, dwelling in all climates, belonging to every order of society, they have all the elements necessary to constitute them the most efficient and successful missionaries. It is from the Jews that we have the Prophets and Apostles, and, according to the flesh, the Lord Jesus Himself, Who is God over all, blessed for ever. From the conversion of the Jews would flow the conversion of the Gentiles, and then, and not till then, shall all the glorious promises of the latter days be fulfilled; then, and not till then, will He accomplish the number of His Elect, and bring to pass His Kingdom.

I cannot help thinking that the limited amount of interest and success in our foreign missionary work may be explained by the want of those primal steps necessary to ensure the full blessing. I believe that the Jews will prove the great missioners and regenerators of the earth. We must look forward to that time when the darkness shall fall from their eyes, and the hardness from their hearts, when they shall 'look on Him whom they have pierced,' and then we may hope that the vast masses of Buddhists, Brahmins, Mahommedans, and heathen will be won into the fold of the Church. There are many signs that a great crisis in the history of the Jews is at hand. There was perhaps never a time in modern history in which so much attention was given by the Jews to the subject of the Messiahship. We have an extraordinary movement in Bessarabia of many Jews who, without any external influence, are working their way to a true doctrine of the Messiah. The writings of the late Lawrence Oliphant give, unhappily without any Christian aim, most interesting information on the condition and prospects of the Holy Land. Bishop Blythe speaks of the many thousand Jews who, of recent times, have flocked to the Holy Land. Our duty, the duty of the Church, is quite clear—the duty of work and prayer. The ancient command and blessing are with us: 'O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love Thee!'

Those who would wish to evince their practical interest in this Mission might send any help to the Rev. M. Rosenthal, 32, Navarino Road, Dalston, or to the Treasurer of the Rosenthal Fund, F. A. White, Esq., 2, Lime Street Square, London, E.C.

F. ARNOLD.

TRIAL BY JURY.

THE word Jury is derived from the Latin juro, to 'swear.' If this derivation is kept steadily in mind it will serve as a guiding thread, by which we may trace, from what has been thought to be its first suggestion, the twelve sworn thegns of the laws of Ethelred, that system of criminal procedure which has gradually developed into our present trial by jury.

By a jury we now understand a body of twelve men sworn to decide facts truly, according to the evidence supplied to them, but the functions of the first jurors were, as will be seen, very different.

In its present complete form, trial by jury has scarcely existed more than four hundred years, but the principles of justice which by their gradual working have produced it may be found in the first records we have of our forefathers' manners and customs before they had left their first home in the forests of Germany. 'It is the very ancient privilege of the people of England,' says Burke in his speech on the Powers of Juries, 'that they shall be tried, except in the known exceptions, not by judges appointed by the Crown, but by their own fellow-subjects, the peers of that county court at which they owe their suit and service; and out of this principle trial by juries has grown.' Burke's retrospect probably did not extend beyond the Norman Conquest, but he might have derived the great principle of free trial in open court, not by an arbitrary judge, but by verdict of peers, from a far remoter age. Tacitus, in the 'Germania,' says that every free man accused of crime was tried in the general assembly, presided over by an elected magistrate, who had with him one hundred assessors or companions whose business it was both to declare the law and to weigh the evidence. Tacitus wrote in the first century of our era, but we may fairly assume that the customs found to prevail among any people, when they emerge into the light of the civilised world, have been handed down through long prehistoric ages in which tradition has been the only law.

After the English settlement in Britain, when the introduction of Christianity and education had changed them from a barbarian to a civilised people, this stationary condition of law would no longer continue; written law began to supersede customary, and each king, as he reissued the enactments of his predecessor, made such amendments and additions as he thought good. Nevertheless, we can plainly detect in the methods of criminal procedure which obtained in England in the tenth century an original identity with those described in the 'Germania.' Two grades of courts were established throughout the country to try both criminal and civil suits. First, the court of the hundred or wapentake, formed of a union of townships. This court met every month, and was composed of all the lords of lands within the hundred, and the parish priest, the reeve and four best men from each township. The whole body of suitors, that is, the whole body of those bound to attend the court, were the judges; but, as inconvenience naturally arose from the employment of so large a number, there appears to have arisen a practice of appointing a body of twelve, to act as a sort of Judicial Committee. No suit, either criminal or civil, might be carried into the higher court of the shire until it had been heard in the hundred. We must not bring our modern ideas into these primitive courts, and fancy that the judges arrived at their verdict after patient examination of witnesses and sifting of evidence. The sole duty of the judges was to decide the law. The court had other methods for proving or disproving matters of fact—compurgation, the testimony of sworn witnesses, and the ordeal.

The complainant made his charge according to a traditional form, and the defendant cleared himself on oath. Each then produced a body of friends who, with hands joined together, and one voice, swore that their principal's oath was pure and honest. These were the compurgators; they swore, not to any particular fact, but to the general character of their principal. Each party might then produce witnesses, who were supposed to have special knowledge concerning the facts in dispute. They were not first sworn, and then examined on the whole question, but only swore to the particular fact on which the judges determined that evidence should be taken. If the matter was still undecided, as must often have been the case when there was no want of hard swearing on both sides, recourse was had to the ordeal. The course of proceeding in the shire court was the same as that in the hundred. It met twice a year. It was presided over by the alderman, the sheriff and the bishop, and was composed, like the hundred court, of all lords of manors, and of representatives from each township in the shire.

So far, obviously, there is no approach in either court to trial by jury. There is, however, one law of Ethelred II. in which, as it entails on the community the duty of prosecution, a remote connection has been traced with our present grand jury; but the meaning of the clause is doubtful. 'Let pleas be held in each wapentake, and let the twelve senior thegns go out, and the reeve with them, and swear on the halidome which shall be put in their hands, that they will accuse no innocent man, and conceal no guilty one.' But, according to Bishop Stubbs, it is in the system of recognition by sworn inquest, which (with the doubtful exception just referred to, of Ethelred's reign) is a Norman innovation, that we find the direct forerunner of the jury system.

In the fourth year of his reign, William I. issued a commission of inquiry into the national customs. The necessary information was to be obtained from twelve men of each shire, who swore to tell the whole truth, without omission, addition, or prevarication, concerning the old laws and customs. The Doomsday survey again was carried out on the same plan. The royal commissioners summoned before them the sheriff, and all the Norman landholders in each shire, representatives from each hundred, and the priest, reeve, and six villeins from each township. On the sworn testimony of these men was founded that minute and nearly exhaustive record of everything concerning the land and its occupiers which is one of our greatest historical and antiquarian treasures. Both William II. and Henry I. made use of juries of recognition for the purpose of assessing taxes. 'Such was the instrument,' says Bishop Stubbs, 'which, introduced in its rough simplicity at the Conquest, was developed by the lawyers of the Plantagenet period into the modern trial by jury.' But, before entering into the series of judicial changes made by Henry II., it is important to notice one innovation of Henry I. He expressly ordained that the old local courts should be held as in the time of the Confessor. They met at the same time and place, and transacted the same business, according to the old traditional forms. But the Bishop and Ealderman no longer sat beside the Sheriff in the shire court. The Bishop now sat in his newly constituted spiritual court, and the Ealderman had disappeared altogether. In their place there now frequently sat beside the sheriff a royal officer, a baron from the King's Court, who, though his work was rather to assess the revenue than to administer justice, formed with his fellows the first of the series of itinerant judges who have developed into our judges of assize. Pleas, moreover, could now be carried from the county to the royal courts. Henry I. thus began that system of uniting the old local courts with the central authority, which gave the government that cohesion and stability which had been often so fatal a want under the English kings.

We now come to that remarkable series of assizes or edicts by which Henry II. revised the whole judicial system. By the Great Assize, issued some time early in his reign, the litigant in a civil suit who wished to avoid the ordeal by battle (a practice which had been introduced by the Normans, but never willingly accepted by the English) might obtain recognition of his right by inquest of jury. Twelve lawful knights of the neighbourhood, after having sworn 'that they will not speak falsehood nor conceal truth,' but declare what they know either by their own eyewitnesses, or 'by the words of their fathers, and by such words as they are bound to have such confidence in as if they were their own,' were to pronounce which of the two claimants had the better right to the freehold in dispute. If, however, the twelve knights did not agree in their testimony, others were to be summoned, until the unanimous oath of twelve had been obtained. Conclusive testimony in a transaction of writ of right, or, in the legal language of the day, an assize of 'Novel Disseisin,' as Hallam points out, would not in general be difficult to obtain. As Sir F. Palgrave says, 'the forms, the festivities, and the ceremonies accompanying the hours of joy, and the days of sorrow, which form the distinguishing epochs in the brief chronicle of domestic life, impressed them upon the memory of the people at large. The parchment might be recommended by custom, but it was not required by law; and they had no register to consult, no books to open. By the declaration of the husband at the church door, the wife was endowed in the presence of the assembled relations, and before all the merry attendants of the bridal train.

The birth of the heir was recollected by the retainers who had participated in the cheer of the baronial hall; and the death of the ancestor was proved by the friends who had heard the wailing of the widow, or who had followed the corpse to the grave. Hence trial by jury was an appeal to the knowledge of the country; and the sheriff, in naming his panel, performed his duty by summoning those individuals from amongst the inhabitants who were best acquainted with the points at issue.'

The Assize of Clarendon, 1166, ordains that all persons accused of felony by public report are to be presented to the County Court, whether presided over by the justice or the sheriff, by juries of twelve men from each hundred, and four from each township. The accused are to go to the ordeal; even if not convicted by this test, they are still to be outlawed, as persons of notoriously bad character. No franchises are to exclude the justices—a decided blow at the feudal immunities. The plan of sending itinerant justices on circuit round the kingdom, begun by Henry I., was carefully elaborated by Henry II., and may from this time be looked on as a regular part of the judicial system. Their fiscal character also, which had been prominent under Henry I., is now subservient to their judicial.

Before the end of Henry II.'s reign, compurgation had been done away, and, when in 1215 the ordeal also was abolished by the Lateran Council, none of the traditional methods remained by which an accused person might dispute the presentment of the grand jury. But new methods were now coming into use. Even before the abolition of the ordeal a petty jury had been sometimes employed to *traverse the decision of the grand jury*, though exactly how the practice arose we have no record, and in the time of Henry III. the practice became general. The identity of the name of petty jury for both the medieval and modern juries, must not confuse us into imagining an identity of functions. The distinction is well brought out by Sir F. Palgrave in the following passage: 'Trial by jury, according to the old English law, was a proceeding essentially different from the modern tribunal, still bearing the same name, by which it has been replaced; and whatever merits belonged to the original mode of judicial investigation—and they were great and unquestionable, though accompanied by many imperfections—such benefits are not to be exactly identified with the advantages now resulting from the great bulwark of English liberty. Jurymen in the present day are triers of the issue; they are individuals who found their opinion upon the evidence, whether oral or written, adduced before them; and the verdict delivered by them is their declaration of the judgment which they have formed. But the ancient jurymen were not impanelled to examine into the credibility of the evidence; the question was not discussed and argued before them; they, the jurymen, were themselves witnesses, and the verdict was substantially the examination of these witnesses, who of their own knowledge, and without the aid of other testimony, afforded their evidence respecting the facts in question to the best of their belief. In its primitive form a trial by jury was therefore only a trial by witnesses; and jurymen were distinguished from any other witnesses only by customs which imposed upon them the obligation of an oath, and regulated their number, and which prescribed their rank, and defined the territorial qualifications from whence they obtained their degree and influence in society.

The practical working, however, of this system ere long raised another difficulty. The juries were found not to be always personally acquainted with the facts in dispute; they were then allowed to add to their number, by what was called *afforcement*, witnesses who had the required knowledge. This practice of afforcing the jury dates from the reign of Edward I., and marks a distinct step towards the perfecting of the system, for when the jury confessed that they did not deliver the verdict from their own knowledge of the facts, but from the sworn witness of others, they resigned their old function of personal testimony for that of discrimination of testimony. Before long the change was fully carried out. The petty jury wholly resigned the character of witnesses, and became judges of the facts according to the testimony of the afforcing jury, who on their side laid aside all judicial functions, and became simply sworn witnesses. The law was declared by the presiding judge. This change was effected some time in the course of the 14th century, but the whole matter is very obscure. As Hallam says, 'We are reduced to conjectural inferences from brief passages in early law-books, written for contemporaries, but which leave a considerable uncertainty. If we say that our actual trial by jury was established not far from the beginning of the 15th century, we shall perhaps approach as nearly as the diligence of late inquirers has enabled us to proceed.' But, after all, the obscurity in which the question is involved is of no practical matter, unless, indeed, we welcome it as a sign that this cherished institution is a spontaneous growth of the national genius, the result, not of arbitrary enactment, but of practical common sense, gradually finding out by experience the best methods for discovering truth and distributing justice. When at the end of the 15th century the veil is suddenly lifted, it is impossible not to feel astonishment at the progress made, silently and secretly, as it seems to us, though to contemporaries it may have worn a very different aspect.

Sir John Fortescue, the great Lancastrian lawyer, gives in two most valuable treatises his view of the nature of the English constitution. In the treatise 'De Laudibus Legum Angliæ' he describes the process of trial by jury. 'Twelve good and true men being sworn as in the manner above related, legally qualified—that is, having, over and besides their movable possessions, in land sufficient (as was said) wherewith to maintain their rank and station—neither suspected by nor at variance with either of the parties; all of the neighbourhood; there shall be read to them in English by the court the record and nature of the plea at length which is depending between the parties; and the issue thereupon shall be plainly laid before them, concerning the truth of which those who are so sworn are to certify the court; which done, each of the parties, by themselves or their counsel, in presence of the court, shall declare and lay open to the jury all and singular the matters and evidences whereby they think they may be able to inform the court concerning the truth of the point in question; after which each of the parties has a liberty to produce before the court all such witnesses as they please, or can get to appear on their behalf, who, being charged upon their oaths, shall give in evidence all that they know touching the truth of the fact concerning which the parties are at issue. And, if necessity so require, the witnesses may be heard and examined apart, till they shall have deposed all that they have to give in evidence, so that what the one has declared shall not inform or induce another witness of the same side to give his evidence in the same words, or to the very same effect.

The whole of the evidence being gone through, the jurors shall confer together at their pleasure, as they shall think most convenient, upon the truth of the issue before them, with as much deliberation and leisure as they can well desire; being all the while in the keeping of an officer of the court, in a place assigned them for that purpose, lest any one should attempt by indirect methods to influence them as to their opinion, which they are to give in to the court. Lastly, they are to return into court and certify the justices upon the truth of the issue so joined in the presence of the parties (if they please to be present), particularly the person who is plaintiff in the cause; what the jurors shall so certify, in the laws of England is called the verdict.'

The jury system, then, may be looked on as fully developed before the end of the 15th century; the moderate and constitutional character of the Lancastrian kings had sheltered its growth, it remained to be seen how it would fare under the despotic rule of the Tudors and Stuarts. Hallam enumerates five essential checks upon the royal authority at the accession of Henry VII.; of these the fourth and fifth are as follows. 'The fact of guilt or innocence on a criminal charge was determined in a public court and in the county where the offence was alleged to have occurred, by a jury of twelve men, from whose unanimous verdict no appeal could be made. Civil rights, so far as they depended on questions of fact, were subject to the same decision. The officers and servants of the crown, violating the personal liberty or other right of the subject, might be sued in an action for damages to be assessed by a jury, or, in some cases, were liable to criminal process; nor could they plead any warrant or command in their justification, not even the direct order of the king.' These securities for personal liberty had by the 16th century become too firmly grounded for an English sovereign, however arbitrary in disposition, to attempt altogether to ignore or annul them. They could, however, evade them, and this they did so successfully and consistently, that during the Tudor reigns the subject found his right of trial by jury no protection against the displeasure of the Crown. Henry VIII. boldly discarded at his pleasure the regular forms of legal procedure in favour of acts of attainder forced through parliament, but his father and his children were, in general, content with threatening and coercing juries into returning such verdicts as were desired by the Crown. One of the chief functions of the Star-Chamber, when first instituted by Henry VII., was to regulate trial by jury, and to see that by the strict enforcement of the statutes of livery and maintenance the nobles were deprived of their powers of overawing by their large trains of liveried dependants the decisions both of judges and juries. But, if the Star Chamber was useful in supporting justice in cases where the Crown had no concern, in Crown cases it had no scruple about the means employed to obtain a favourable verdict. 'If,' says Sir Thomas Smith in his treatise on the Commonwealth of England, quoted by Hallam, 'they do pronounce not guilty upon the prisoner, against whom manifest witness is brought in, the prisoner escapeth, but the twelve are not only rebuked by the judges, but also threatened of punishment and many times commanded to appear in the Star Chamber, or before the Privy Council, for the matter. But this threatening chanceth oftener than the execution thereof; and the twelve answer with most gentle words, they did it according to their consciences, and pray the judges to be good to them; they did as they thought right, and as they accorded all; and so it passeth away for the most part. Yet I have seen in my time, but not in the reign of the king now (Elizabeth), that an inquest, for pronouncing one not guilty of treason contrary to such evidence as was brought in, were not only imprisoned for a space, but a large fine set upon their heads, which they were fain to pay; another inquest, for acquitting another, beside paying a fine, were put to open ignominy and shame. But these doings were even then accounted of many for violent, tyrannical, and contrary to the liberty and custom of the realm of England.'

One of the most notorious cases of this kind is that of Sir Nicholas Thockmorton, who was tried and acquitted, for the part he had taken in Wyatt's rebellion. The jury were imprisoned for their verdict; four of them, acknowledging their fault, were soon released, but the others who presumed to justify what they had done were heavily fined. Under the Stuarts, though the jurisdiction of the Star Chamber was in many respects increased, it does not appear to have meddled so much with the administration of other courts, and, when it had in 1642 been altogether done away, the Crown had no longer any direct instrument for the purpose. The records of the state trials in the reigns of Charles II. and James II. show, however, that the subject was not yet sure of a fair trial. The Crown could no longer fine and imprison contumacious jurymen, but it could frighten the judges, who were entirely dependent on the royal favour, and the judges in their turn could browbeat the juries, and misinterpret the law. Moreover, by collusion with the sheriffs, the juries were often packed in a shameless manner.

Macaulay dwells very much on the flagrant perversion of justice. 'Does your lordship think,' said Baxter, when on his trial before Jeffreys, 'that any jury will convict a man on such a trial as this?' 'I warrant you, Mr. Baxter,' said Jeffreys, 'don't trouble yourself about that.' No wonder, when justice was administered in such a manner, that the public anxiety should have been so intense during the trial of the bishops, or that, when the verdict of not guilty had been given, the enthusiasm of those present should have found vent in a shout of joy which cracked the oak roof of the hall. The relief felt was not only for the freedom of the bishops, but because a jury had at length been found brave enough to defy Court influence.

The constitutional changes which resulted from the Revolution did not avert all dread of unjust verdicts. Nothing but a high standard of public opinion could do this. Even at the close of the last century the unreasonable panic into which the Government and a large part of the nation were thrown by the Revolutionary excesses in France had a very disastrous effect on the fairness of juries. To give one instance. In 1792, Mr. Winterbotham, a Baptist minister, was tried for seditious expressions in his sermons. The evidence against him was so weak and his defence so conclusive that the judge directed his acquittal, yet the jury brought in a verdict of guilty, and he was fined £100 and sentenced to four years' imprisonment. The acquittal of Hardy, Horne Tooke, and Joyce, in 1794, put an end to what almost might be called this reign of terror, and proved, as Sir Erskine May says, 'that if the executive had been too easily alarmed, and Parliament too readily persuaded of the existence of danger, the administration of justice had not been tampered with; and that, even in the midst of panic, an English jury would see right done between the Crown and the meanest of its subjects.'

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

BY LOUISA DUNDAS.

I.

THE Hebrews divided their Bible into three parts—the Law, the Prophets, and the Scriptures. The first, the Pentateuch, we may pass by. The second contained twenty-one books, written by Prophets, who were the teachers, historians, recorders—in short, the literary class, or caste, of the nation. Their office was, of course, that of the 'Seer'—the 'predicter' (ὁ προφήτης), but it was also instructive, a fact we must bear in mind. This set of writings comprehends not merely those we call 'the Prophets,' divided into Greater and Lesser, but all the didactic or instructive records. The third class, or 'Scriptures,' contained the poetic and devotional Books, not included in the other divisions.*

Samuel, then, occupies the same place with us that it did with the Hebrews—the third Book in the second group, Joshua and Judges preceding it.† We say 'Book,' because it was originally only one. When divided, it was called Kings i. and ii., and this heading Βασιλείων i. ii., is still seen in the Septuagint. This helps us to understand their very important position in the Canon, *i.e.* order of Scripture. Never let us suppose the arrangement merely arbitrary, or we may miss the unity and plan of the Revelation of God. Samuel may be considered important for several reasons. As history, it carries on the records of Joshua and Judges; as prophecy, it is full both of instruction and likewise of 'prediction,'—more Messianic, throwing more 'light' on the Person and Offices of 'the coming One,' than any earlier teaching had yet done. But, further, it makes 'a new departure'—a great transition stage in Jewish annals; a terrible crisis of warning, out of which appears a renewal of Divine mercy and grace.

Samuel, then, taking the books together, is 1. A sequel to Judges; 2. A Messianic revelation; 3. A great national crisis and fresh departure.

God willed to educate the world for the coming of His Son, by His dealings with the Nation of Jesus. All the representative men of Israel were to foreshadow in some way Christ the Redeemer. A few

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* The Oxford Bible Notes contain all possible information on this subject.

† Ruth was placed in the Poetic Division; but there is an important link with Samuel, which we shall notice later.

—as, for instance, Joseph—did so by personal character: but a much larger class by the office, position, or work to which they were appointed. Three offices were held only by special election or calling of God, sometimes accompanied by solemn unction, as an outward sign of Divine consecration; no man might take any one of them upon himself—these were Prophet, Priest, and King. Any one thus called and consecrated prefigures the Office and Work of Christ; but it has been well remarked, while many have held one, and some been permitted to combine two, the holding of the three offices in one Person was reserved for the Prototype alone.

The life of Samuel, then, begins at a time when the Jews had learnt something of Priesthood and Sacrifice; and were now to learn more fully the nature of the Prophetic office. There had been indications given already, but Moses had distinctly foretold * the era now begun in Samuel, the establishment of a regular school, or collegiate body, to train men for the work, while waiting on God's call to the exercise of the prophetic ministry, henceforth to be in the ascendant, even through the Captivity, till within a few centuries of Christ's birth. Samuel himself, the last of the Judges, was to inaugurate the first king, to bless and consecrate him, and, at the same time, to administer God's warning and reproof to His wilful people. From Samuel, then, to Malachi there is no break in the succession of Prophets.

Let us turn now to Book I.: it falls naturally into three divisions—1. Eli's rule, till his death, Chap. i. to iv., inclusive. 2. Samuel's rule, from Eli's death to his own resignation of office, chap. v. to xiii. 3. Saul's reign, chap. xiii. to end. The first division includes these events: 1. Samuel's birth; 2. His mother's prophetic hymn; 3. Eli's judgeship, his family and their denunciation, with the call of Samuel and special revelation to him; 4. The battle of Aphek, and capture of the Ark.

Perhaps there is no lovelier idyll in Scripture story than that of Samuel's birth. Elkanah is a Levite, living at Ramathaim Zophim, identical with Ramoth-Gilead, a Levite city and also one of refuge, near the site of Jacob's covenant with Laban, known later as Ramah.† Elkanah has two wives; polygamy was not forbidden to Levites as it was to Priests, but the relaxation of strictness was not common; perhaps it indicates the general lawlessness mentioned in Judges xxi. 25. The two wives have Phœnician names—'Hannah,' meaning 'beauty' or 'charm'—'Peninnah,' like our Margaret, 'a pearl.' Many women in the Bible are described as suffering like Hannah—grieving over the absence of motherhood, but she is especially marked out as a type of the Church of Christ, by the added sorrow of Peninnah's unholy triumph. Polygamy, we know, besides its other

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* Deut. xviii. 15, 18.

† All the localities should be studied with a map. 'Ramathaim' is plural of 'Ramah.' Zophim probably is land or property of Zuph = Zophai. Compare 1 Chron. vi. for the genealogy.

social evils, must have cut at the very root of domestic happiness and turned even the best of God's blessings into openings for sin; too insidious for our nature to resist.

In spite of great national decadence, the worship of God is still maintained at Shiloh, where His tabernacle stands, a city having grown up around it. Its situation is described in Joshua xviii. 1; and minutely in Judges xxv. 19. It probably was chosen for the Sanctuary from its central position, accessible to all the tribes; and from its elevation, making it more secure from hostile attacks. Josephus speaks of its beauty, but this is not observable now, though Seilùn is on the same spot. Dean Stanley thinks that many regions once fertile may have been made barren by cutting away the woods, and thus lessening the rainfall. We could hardly describe Palestine at the present day as 'a land flowing with milk and honey.' Elkanah and his family go yearly up the steep ascent from Ramah, to keep the joyous Feast of Tabernacles at Shiloh, to sacrifice unto 'the Lord of Hosts.' It is the first time this epithet occurs in the Bible. At the family feast upon the sacrifice, Elkanah distributes the hallowed food, showing his love for Hannah, as Joseph once distinguished Benjamin, by a 'worthy,' i.e. double, portion. But the weight of her sorrow presses peculiarly hard at this time. Her rival sits proud and exultant with the fair children gathering about her, scornfully looking down on the childless wife. The husband—whose gentle kindness contrasts favourably with Jacob's impatient chiding of Rachel in her similar trial—does his best to comfort Hannah, but she turns away from them all, and goes back to the sanctuary to pray alone in the court, to cast her burden upon the Lord.

Special notice must be taken of her prayer. It is not the first recorded in Scripture, nor can we be sure that it is the first 'silent prayer.'* We know not whether the prayers of Eleazar, Abraham, and others were uttered aloud; or even in the wrestling of Penuel, so mysteriously prefiguring Gethsemane, where the true *ἀγωνιστής*, the wrestler, was the Prince of the Israel of God. We cannot tell whether articulate words expressed the spiritual conflict. But the special feature of Hannah's lies in its being the first time we are told of, when the national public worship became a vehicle of personal private devotion; when an individual private sorrow or need was thus laid down in God's own Sanctuary.† It required a strong faith in God's power and love to do this, and it is pleasant to carry on our thoughts to the woman who bore the same name, the 'Anna,' who departed not from God's House, and received as the recompense of her prayers the sight of our Lord in His infancy. But the whole reminds us, as we have already said (*vide* Introductory Paper), that only God, unto whom all hearts are open, could thus reveal to us the secrets of human lives exactly like our own. We see Elkanah,

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* Dean Stanley says this.

† *Vide* Stanley's 'Jewish Church,' Lect. xvii.

Peninnah, Hannah, just as if they lived now—the latter especially, with the emotional loving nature, easily wounded, sensitive to slights, and now abandoning herself to an hysterical outburst of grief, careless of man's observation, but praying with the fervour which generally marks this temperament. Her prayer is accompanied by a vow something like that of Jacob at Bethel. Little did she understand all the important issues that would flow from the granting of the petition and the fulfilling of the vow; but to us it is one of the best instances we can have of God's being 'wont to give more than either we desire or deserve.' And now a fresh character is introduced upon the scene.

Eli and his position deserve special notice. He is both Priest and Judge, the first instance of a Levite holding this temporal judgeship. But he is not of the direct line of Eleazar, Aaron's elder son, who replaced Nadab and Abihu.* Jews have a strange tradition that the elder line was rejected from the priesthood, because Phinehas assisted in the unnatural sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter. The dates make this almost impossible, but, as Dean Stanley points out in striking words, it is 'possibly some faint reminiscence of a tradition indicating the submersion of the house of Eleazar in the general disorder of the age, of which that dark event was undoubtedly a consequence.' Eli is of the line of Ithamar, Aaron's youngest son, and, as the Philistines have evidently received some check, it may be, that from some exploit in early life he had been chosen to fulfil the Judge's office, that of the Priesthood falling to him as Aaron's next descendant. His sons were undoubtedly looking forward to the succession, so that a line of hereditary warrior-priests seemed to be in prospect, but God willed it otherwise.

We have said that the nation was in a shifting, transitional state, and that a crisis was at hand. The Judges were not in direct succession, but were called one by one to the front, in time of public necessity—each as a kind of Vercingetorix—to lead the host to battle. This, being unsatisfactory in time of peace, has a tendency to become hereditary, and Eli's 'seat' by the gateway is the same in kind as that of Solomon in a later age, the chair from which he administered justice, and from which he could observe all who entered within the courts of Shiloh. It makes a connecting link between the old and new modes of government. And now Eli observes Hannah, in her voiceless agony of supplication. When his well-meant but misplaced rebuke is gently and patiently met, he pronounces a blessing on the act of worship. How little he knows what the granting of that petition portends to himself! but so our lives are all bound up together, though we know it not at the time. In Hannah's conduct—a pattern to all impulsive natures, apt as they are to feel keenly unjust blame—we are again pointed forward to a yet lovelier example, Our Lord's dear Mother; upon whose wordless endurance of a still more cruel suspicion, Scripture casts a reverent veil. Hannah goes back cheered and refreshed; she can 'eat,' and take part in the general rejoicing. Shiloh was gay at this time, as at a vintage or harvest festival. We hear in Judges xxi. of the 'dancing at Shiloh,' at this Feast of Booths, or Bowers.

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* *Vide* Numbers iii. 1–4.

(v. 19.) The next incident is the birth of Samuel, and his naming —a common Oriental custom—from the circumstances of that birth, 'Asked of God.' * Hannah's action in remaining at Ramah till she had weaned him—two years or more, in ordinary cases—is another indication of combined strength and gentleness. She is in no haste, for her heart is fixed, she can wait even while her treasure grows daily more precious to her, until the time when he can safely be withdrawn from her care. Elkanah seems fully aware of her power of judging rightly, his heart can safely trust her; and we can admire in him, too, the willing consent to Hannah's offering, the dedication of this son, dear to him as the long-wished-for children of Rachel were to the ancestor Jacob. But now they again ascend the steep hill-paths to Shiloh. They bring the special offerings (Numb. xxviii. 12) for the occasion; † with the flour and wine for the meat and drink-offering. But the mother carries with a heart full of holy joy her 'loan unto the Lord,' and stands again by Eli's seat—'here' is an emphatic word—pouring out her thankfulness as she had poured out her sorrow, eagerly, impulsively. Our word 'lent' (v. 28) is better rendered by 'returned.' The last clause 'and he worshipped' is omitted in the Septuagint. The pronoun 'he' can hardly apply to Samuel or to Elkanah, who are not named in the passage. Some think ‡ the Hebrew idiom permits of the masculine pronoun being applied to Hannah, though others prefer the less likely solution that this was the child's first act of worship. It is interesting, however, to remember that Samuel was afterwards noted in Holy Writ as a 'man of prayer.' 'Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among such as call upon His Name' (Psalm xcix. 6), as if he inherited his mother's fervent spirit of devotion.

We must pause over Hannah's predictive song; the Magnificat of the Old Testament. It belongs to the same class of utterances as the songs of Miriam, Deborah, and others—besides the yet diviner Canticle of Mary, which it resembles. Note, *first*, that in all these, and similar cases, the song is an act of personal devotion: Hannah prayed and 'said'; and, *secondly*, that they are all both personal and prophetic. The speaker utters words which express her own case, but she is God's instrument for making a prophetic announcement of far greater import than she or her hearers can understand at the time. Note, *thirdly*, the Messianic character of Hannah's song. This can best be done by laying it side by side with the *Magnificat*, and carefully marking their points of likeness and difference. It is possible, of course, that Mary, well versed in the Scriptures, quoted more or less consciously the words of Hannah, but her far higher strain shows the effect of centuries of further development of God's purposes to His waiting people. But as with Miriam and Deborah, and now with Hannah, none could have told the full meaning of her own words, so to a certain extent it was with the blessed Mother of our Lord. The opening of both hymns is remarkably alike, each represents herself as honoured by God Himself, raised from a lower to a higher position, and rejoicing in it. To Hannah, He is the strong Rock, the Zurishaddai of the old Covenant; to Mary He is still more, 'God my Saviour'—Jah-hoshua, now revealed by the name she is to give her child: 'JESUS.' Then the strain goes on, with much the same choice of symbols. In both, the high are brought low, the rich are made poor, the humble are raised, the hungry are fed. As to points of difference—Hannah alludes to 'enemies.' Mary has none. Hannah looks back upon a bitter past, and rebukes a scornful rival. Mary looks forward, saying 'all generations' for His sake will call her blessed. Lastly, Hannah expects a still more abundant 'revelation,' the Lord shall give strength unto His king, and exalt the horn of His Christ.* Mary can speak of the accomplished hope, 'He hath holpen His servant Israel.'

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* Or it may be 'Heard of God.' 'Samuel,' or 'Shemuel,' is the same as 'Ishmael.'

† The Septuagint reads: 'a bullock of three years'—probably correct, as only *one* bullock is said to be slain.

‡ *Vide* 'Speaker's Commentary,' the same thing occurs in v. 7. Peninnah is spoken of as 'he.'

And now the parents depart, leaving the little child with Eli. Our thoughts go onward to the Divine Child in Simeon's arms. Surely to Hannah the same words might have been spoken, 'This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel,' had the spirit of prophecy been granted to any of those present. He was to announce God's judgment—of which his mother had just prophesied—to the falling house of Eli, before his childhood was past; and in later life, when Shiloh lay in ruins, he was to inaugurate the line of prophets, and anoint the first king, two most important stages of preparation for the Messiah.

The shadow begins to darken (v. 12), Eli's sons now appear, God's priests and 'children of Belial.' The word signifies a godless, irreligious life. Hannah uses it (i. 16). Hophni and Phinehas profane their holy office by unlawfully, even forcibly, taking more than the priest's due portion of each sacrifice. To understand the sin of their conduct, one must read carefully Leviticus iii., observing how minute were the directions, and how defiant was their disobedience. Neither fat nor blood were to form any part of food, they typified the life and the strength; the one was to be burnt, the other poured out or sprinkled before the Lord. We see how much carelessness, irreverence, and unseemly self-indulgence were thus practised under Eli's eyes, how those who desired to worship rightly had even come to abhor the offering of the Lord. And then (v. 22) we read how, in their usual course, gluttony and irreverence end in the gross licentiousness which was the invariable accompaniment of the religious rites practised by the heathen nations around. When we read this terrible announcement, we surely can see how needful was every restriction, every enactment laid upon the Chosen People, with the view of keeping them separate from the heathendom around them. The birth of Samuel is considered by the best commentators to have been about 150 years after the Conquest; how short a time had passed, since the Tabernacle had been settled at Shiloh, and already the priests themselves were corrupting the worship, and defiling the Sanctuary! Eli, who seems to have passed over the self-indulgence and greed, is alarmed and stung into remonstrance by the increasing evil of the reports, but it is too late. He is a sad instance of blindness of heart—so keen to observe and ready to reprove Hannah for what he deemed unseemly conduct in God's Tabernacle, so careless as to the profanation by his own sons of the rites prescribed by God Himself; so ready to commend the parents' dedication of Samuel, so unconscious to all appearance of his own failure in duty as a father.*

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* Septuagint χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ—His anointed. It is the first occurrence of the word in Scripture.

By force of contrast, the beauty and innocence of Samuel come touchingly before us. As Hophni and Phinehas sink deeper, rushing headlong against warning to their ruin, how beautiful is v. 26,† carrying us forward through the ages to the Holy Childhood at Nazareth! And now, from v. 27 one should read straight to the end of the chapter. In a Paragraph Bible, the connection of the whole speech, without the break of verses, is perhaps more closely observable. The speaker is 'a man of God,' we know not who or whence. It is the first instance of the prophetic ministry since the days of Deborah; but such instances of 'special commission' of a prophet or messenger from God are not uncommon. In Judges ii. 'the angel' at Bochim seems to be of this class, inspired for a special occasion, possibly with merely temporary power.‡ Read as a whole, the denunciation is as awful as it is magnificent. We may observe generally that, whenever God visits with special chastisement, He invariably warns first, even the heathen. He makes a way of escape, if the sinner will avail himself of it. And of this warning in particular, we may note these points.

I. It is to Eli himself. The sin and the punishment are spoken of as his throughout. Hophni and Phinehas are indeed named, but only to announce their death 'in one day.' The weak, indulgent parent is held accountable for all. II. It sends back Eli's thoughts to the Exodus, even before it, to the election of his father Aaron

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* I confess to being struck with a family likeness in Eli to his forefather Aaron—his weak conduct to his sons, Aaron's irresolute yielding as to the Golden Calf. An 'undesigned coincidence.'

† *Cf.* Luke ii. 52.

‡ The whole of Dean Stanley's Lect. xix. on 'Prophets' will be found very helpful. *Vide* 'Jewish Church,' 1st series. In Judges ii. 'Angel' is 'messenger' in the Septuagint.

(v. 28), and then charges *him* with the blasphemy of using holy ordinances amiss; alluding (v. 30) to the change from Eleazar's to Ithamar's line. The provision made for the priesthood out of the offerings was ample; therefore the rapacity and covetousness which Eli had permitted under his own eyes was the more inexcusable. The very form of transgression mentioned in v. 16 seems to be alluded to here (v. 29), and the expression sends our thoughts back to Moses' prophetic song (Deut. xxxii. 15). III. It gives in order the special duties of the faithful priest: α to offer sacrifice, β to lead worship (incense is typical of this), γ to intercede for the people and inquire of God for them—this being implied in the 'ephod,' in which were the Urim and Thummim (Ex. xxviii. 6–14). But now God will punish the unfaithful sons of Ithamar, cut them off from His altar, even as He had cut off Nadab and Abihu for their sins. IV. Note that the grosser sins of Eli's children are not referred to—only the abuses and disorders in public worship. Surely the practical lesson for all—priests and people—extends even to ourselves. Trifling sins of irreverence, of self-indulgence, are they not possibly the first steps on a career like that of Hophni and Phinehas? Some of us may have heard them mentioned as an instance of depravity in the children of good parents, and lament over the possibility of such cases. But can we think so? As a priest or a father, can we hold Eli excusable? And to any of us who are responsible—it may be only as teacher or guardian or example to younger souls—ought not this warning to be as a trumpet-voice not to neglect the beginnings of sin in ourselves or in them? V. The predictive or Messianic part even of this denunciation. We must note here the 'double horizon' of the prophecy, one fulfilment near at hand, the other carrying us on to the Incarnation. The house of Ithamar is to be rejected, and a 'faithful priest' appointed instead. Though some commentators make this apply to Samuel, the best interpretation carries it on to Zadok, whose family kept their place from Solomon's reign all through the monarchy. This explains v. 32, which is very obscure.* The word 'enemy' is the same as that used of Peninnah (i. 6), and is rather 'rival.' A rival line should take the office with all its privileges and increased wealth. Samuel, the link between the old order and the new, did not set up a house, and was never in any sense the rival of Ithamar's line; v. 35: 'he shall walk before mine Anointed for ever;' again, χριστός (Christ) is the word used, and it refers first to the kingly authority into which Samuel's judgeship should merge, and then to Him Who should assemble all types, and fulfil all prophecies in Himself. Thus, then, is the doom of Shiloh pronounced.

Perhaps there is no scene in the Old Testament which is dearer to us, from our earliest infancy, than that which occurs in chap. iii. The whole story of Samuel's early consecration is taught to us in narration, hymn, and picture, at our mothers' knees. Josephus, writing from a Jewish tradition, makes him twelve years old at the time of his 'call'; so probably some time had gone by since the warning of the last chapter, and there was no further 'word' from the Lord, and no special revelation at the time. Eli was grown more helpless, almost blind; his sons looked forward probably to succeeding him before long. Samuel waited upon the High Priest; one of his duties was to light the seven-branched candlestick which burned until dawn—another to open and close the Tabernacle doors, and we should notice the expressions 'temple,' 'door.' The authorship of these Books has been disputed, and it is said that such terms were marks of a much later age. The best reply is this: there is little doubt that the scattered writings of Samuel, Nathan, Gad, Iddo, and possibly of others, were gathered and put in order—'edited,' we should say—by a later hand. This scribe might have here and there used terms with which he was familiar, *e.g.*, temple for tabernacle. It does not in the least interfere with the strong probability that Samuel wrote the earlier part of this Book that bears his name, and that after his death it was completed by one or other of the above-named Prophets; and the second Book added by them later in time.* As to the 'door,' it is true that the Tabernacle of the Wilderness—tent-like—had no doors, and was closed by curtains, but this arrangement, suited to a movable tent, was probably altered at Shiloh, where it was fixed, and where a town sprang up around it. It is a proof of the writer's accuracy; as he saw a door, he named one (v. 4). What a contrast to the scene in the former chapter! The Voice soft and mild, from out of the Holy Place—making him three times run to see if Eli needed his services (v. 7). Samuel had never, as yet, seen any token of God's presence; but at the third summons (v. 9), 'Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child.' If Josephus be correct, his age was that of our Lord, when called to 'His Father's business.' Samuel returns to his place, but he is a child no longer. The calm Voice—whose tones did not alarm him—what terrible things it had spoken! And, as he rises in the burst of the eastern dawn to open the doors, a fresh alarm seizes him—how can he tell Eli? But to him there was nothing new. Possibly, in the lapse of time, the words of the man of God had lost their first awfulness, but here the message comes direct from God Himself. And is this the beginning of that rivalship in the Sanctuary, predicted to him? The child he had trained in its service, the spiritual son of his old age, receives the direct vision which has long ceased for himself. But never does Eli show better than on this occasion, in his calm reception of the tidings he now wrings from the reluctant 'seer'—'It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good.'

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* Verse 32 is omitted in the Septuagint.

From this day, Samuel's prophetic mission is acknowledged; 'all

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* Of course Samuel's record ceases with chapter xxiv.

Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, hears that the child of the Sanctuary, the young Nazarite, has received the Spirit of the Lord.' He continues in his life of quiet daily service at Shiloh, but the Lord reveals Himself, and makes known His will to this His chosen servant, raised at this juncture to guide and bless and intercede for Israel at the great crisis—the fall of Shiloh, and the inauguration of the monarchy.

The division of the chapter is unfortunate. Referring to the Paragraph Bible, we see that the words: 'And the word of Samuel came to all Israel,' are part of the last sentence. The Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the Word of the Lord; and the word of Samuel came, &c. Samuel declared to the people the Will of the Lord, as it was revealed to him. In our division of the chapter, some have been led to imagine that the people were sent out to battle by the word of Samuel, which was not the case. It is the first mention of the Philistines since Samson's great slaughter of them at his death. They had evidently been kept in check for some time, probably about forty years. Now they gather to a head again; it may be because of the advancing blindness and feebleness of the ruler, giving them fresh courage. They encamp at Aphek, not far from the scene of the victory at Beth-horon.* Another instance of the 'editor's hand' is given in the name of the Israelite camp, both here and in chapter v. 1. 'Eben-ezer' was not named till some years later, when Samuel raised the memorial stone. But the battle turns against Israel, and the leaders hold a conference, in which they resolve to send to Shiloh for the great treasure of the nation, 'the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord.' Mark the expression (v. 3) 'that *it* may save us out of the hand of our enemies.' It was God's Presence, not that of His Ark, that they needed. Israel—partly owing to the corruption and depravity of the priesthood—had fallen away from God during the period of Eli's administration. In the Book of Judges, we see tokens of the growing idolatry—how 'they dealt unfaithfully like their fathers; they were turned aside like a deceitful bow; they provoked Him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.'† How constantly do we see decline in faith, accompanied by superstitious veneration for externals! The Jews were so prone to this fault that it needed all the fencing of the Second Commandment to prevent the holiest things becoming 'idols'—objects of faith—apart from God. Christian nations sinned in the same manner, when they carried into battle or scenes of danger the outward and visible signs of the Eucharist.‡

Hophni and Phinehas now performed their priestly office by carrying the Ark into the camp; none but the priests might touch it. Of Eli's consent we are told nothing, but of his terrible anxiety we learn in v. 13, 'his heart trembled for the Ark of God.' The doom twice spoken—had it fallen at last? He had meekly accepted God's chastisement for himself, and even for his sons, whom he must have felt would return to him no more; but now, the very token of God's Presence in the Sanctuary, was that to become the spoil of the heathen? The camp rang with Israel's wild cry of triumph; surely they were now invincible, the days of Joshua and Gideon had returned. Even the waters had fled before the Ark. God would fight for them as He had done for their fathers. They needed the terrible lesson described thus by their inspired song: 'He was wroth and greatly abhorred Israel: so that He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which He placed among men; and delivered His strength into captivity, and His glory into the enemy's hand.' We see how greatly His people were sunk to the level of the heathen. The Philistines were afraid, 'because God had come into the camp,' regarding the Ark as a 'fetish,' or one of their own idols. The Israelites' joy was equally misplaced and superstitious. 'Quit yourselves like men, and fight,' say the heathen chiefs, and in the very energy of despair they fall upon the ranks of Israel. And Israel fled, the keepers of the Ark were slain, and that token of God's Presence remained in the hands of their enemies.

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* Aphek has not been identified by travellers—no trace of the name exists.

† Psalm lxxviii. 57–65 should be carefully studied: it is the account of this battle and its result—the fall of Shiloh.

‡ The mind of the Anglo-Catholic Church is distinctly expressed in the concluding words of Article XXVIII.

(v. 12.) Perhaps there is nothing more dramatic in Scripture than what follows. The old man, nearly one hundred, who had sat in the raised seat through the long day—watching, waiting, blind and lonely. We know what his forebodings must have been; for the flight of Israel and the slaughter of his sons, the prophet's warnings and the wail ascending from the city to the hill-sanctuary, must have prepared him. But at the mention of the Ark—it hardly needed the heavy fall to kill him. The old man's heart was broken; the spirit went back to God who gave it. But further. There was the young wife and mother, whose travail of her second child came suddenly upon her. Perhaps no incident gives us a stronger impression of the horror that the battle of Aphek left on the Jewish nation. Comparatively little is said about it, possibly, as Dean Stanley says, 'because of the great slaughter, including most of those who could have written the record.' Nothing is said of the ruin of Shiloh, and the desolate condition of the Sanctuary; so again we turn to Psalm lxxviii., with its heading, the instruction (Maschil) of Asaph, for these details: 'The fire consumed their young men, and their maidens were not given to marriage. Their priests fell by the sword, and their widows made no lamentation.' And with this account how does the story of Phinehas' wife entirely correspond! The women around her try to cheer her, as many a widow has been cheered in her dark hour, by the thought of her new-born babe; but she regards not. Yet it is not alone the death of the kind old father, nor even of the young husband, dear in spite of his faults; the Ark of God is taken. What has a daughter of Israel to hope for? It is to this day an eastern custom to name a child, at the moment of birth, from some passing circumstance. So had Sarah named her Isaac 'laughter,' and the dying Rachel her 'Ben-oni,' 'Son of my sorrow.' And so this poor mother says, 'Where is the glory?'—and, naming her Ichabod, she too passes away

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

Questions on the Foregoing Paper.

1. State the place of the Books in our Bible and that of the Jews.
2. Give a short sketch of Eli's position and character.
3. What was the particular sin of Eli's sons with regard to the sacrifices and ritual?
4. What was the government of the Jews at this time (about 150 years after the Conquest)?
5. Compare Hannah's Song with the Magnificat—mention any difference or likeness that strikes you.
6. Mention any way in which Samuel typifies our Lord.
7. Write a short note on any three of these: Elkanah, Hannah, the 'Man of God,' Phinehas' wife, Ramathaim-Zophim, Aphek.
8. What was the sin of carrying the Ark of the Covenant into battle?
9. Give two examples from the Psalms—Bible version—(or Prophets) of the horror caused by the fall of Shiloh.
10. Give two instances from the first four chapters of Samuel, of Messianic prediction (if you can give the twofold meaning of the prophecy, do so).

Answers to be sent, not later than February 2nd, to Miss L. Dundas, 37 Manor Place, Edinburgh. The name and address of writer to be distinctly written *outside* the paper, to prevent difficulty in returning them. The questions can be answered from the Bible alone; but any one who can refer to Stanley's 'Lectures on the Jewish Church,' to the 'Speaker's Commentary,' or even to a Paragraph Bible, will find any of them very helpful, and a good map of Palestine is indispensable. Also the Revised Version should be carefully compared with the A. V.

FRENCH LITERATURE.

Marks for November.

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DEBATABLE GROUND.

FURTHER REMARKS ON THE YEAR'S SUBJECTS.

'Sunday-schools,' 'Modern Education,' 'Ghost Stories,' 'Religious Excitement,' the 'Golden Mean,' 'Women's Friendships,' 'Insight and Charity,' 'Imitating our Betters,' 'Living by Rule,' 'Judgment of Others,' are the subjects which have been debated during this year.

Of these Sunday-schools and Ghosts produced by far the most lively discussions. These were real *debates*, in which the combatants were ranged on opposite sides, and struck out well at each other. The Golden Mean, Insight and Charity, Living by Rule, and the question of the right of judgment, produced a great many papers so nearly unanimous as to leave little room for discussion. Modern education was not put in an attractive form, and Friendship and Excitement were not worked out at all to the extent which Chelsea China hoped they might be.

Chelsea China, of course, receives a great many interesting papers which she cannot publish. Sometimes each correspondent has something individual to say, sometimes all the papers are almost exactly alike. They are often much too long, and, what is very trying, very often they don't come to any conclusion at all, and it is impossible to say that they advocate anything.

To state, for instance, that we should be stern in our dealings with others when *sternness will not hurt them*, is simply begging the question. And to say that Sunday-schools are good if the children love their teacher, when the question is whether under changed conditions such love can be gained, does not help forward the discussion.

And, when the writer really sees both sides so strongly that her judgment is suspended, it would be better to marshal her reasons for and against, so that they can be divided and put opposite each other, and it could be seen whether they contradict each other or not. For sometimes a writer will start with a strong statement, say, in favour of living by rule, and then proceed steadily to break down her own conclusion through the rest of her paper,

Again, some of the writers are so unpractical. They utter the most beautiful sentiments, but they never realise what is to be *done*.

We must hate the sin and love the sinner. Yes, but how are we to *deal* with the sinner? Is she to have a prize for regular attendance if she has been saucy to her teacher, when we know that, if the prize is refused, she will go off in a huff? Are you to recommend that nice affectionate girl, who has so much good in her, as a nursery governess, when you know she is fast and flighty? She *may* behave better next time. What are you to *do?* Generalities settle no questions of this kind, great or small.

Chelsea China hopes her correspondents will pardon these little criticisms. Of course she receives many papers to which they do not in the least apply, many are thoughtful, and all serious and full of anxiety to come to a right conclusion.

But she wishes that the papers were not quite so much alike as they are. It looks as if people were perhaps unwilling to write, who thought that, as it might be put, 'they did not agree with the "Monthly Packet,"' and that, therefore, their opinions would be unacceptable to its readers. But that is exactly what is wanted. Nothing is considered to be a matter of faith which is debated in these pages. We are on Debatable Ground, and the coat is trailed with the most earnest desire that people will tread upon it, and tear it if possible.

LAST WORDS ON LIVING BY RULE.

Since writing my paper and reading those published on 'Is it well to live by rule?' several thoughts have occurred to me on the subject.

There is a danger of a self-inflicted code of rules becoming a sort of 'refinement of selfishness.' It is quite possible to make rules and imagine that one is going to have a little earthly paradise all to one's self and live a sort of ideal life, irrespective of other people. But, on the other hand, rules are a good thing, as shown by the gift of the Ten Commandments to the children of Israel. I think where they went wrong was in using them as the boundary line of their goodness, and justifying themselves for keeping them only in the letter; whereas they were only intended as hurdles, placed in the 'hedge' of God's Will, where they were likely to break through. The keeping of rules should be regarded not as the summit of our ideal, but as a foundation to help us towards that ideal. The spokes of an umbrella would be of little use without the covering, yet the covering without them would be but a sorry thing to keep off the rain!

If there is a danger of becoming crude, or selfish, or self-righteous by the conscientious keeping of rules, surely there is a remedy for it if we remember that, like children at school, we have a copy set us to do, and it is only by looking at the pattern that we can become like it. If we take our eyes off the pattern, to admire our own work, of course it is not likely that we shall improve. SUNFLOWER.

(The Ten Commandments are not rules, they are Principles of Conduct; if they were rules, the seventh day could not have been discarded for the first.—Chelsea China.)

SOCIAL BETTERS.

Chelsea China heartily welcomes an American correspondent.

Since Chelsea China suggests a 'hearty democratic answer' to

Chalk-Hill-Blue's paper on this question, it has occurred to the writer, a native of and dweller in a democratic country, to attempt to give such a one.

Whether imitation of social betters leads to good or evil, depends upon *what* we imitate, and the motive for such imitation.

Follies and vices are unfortunately as common among the upper as in the middle and lower classes, and perhaps are more often and easily imitated than anything else.

A servile copy of mere outside show tends to nothing but harm.

Should the imitation of what is noblest and best in a social superior lead to a desire for self-improvement, how can it be otherwise than good?

If 'small farmers' drive dog-carts and send their daughters to school, is it fair to conclude they do so *solely* to be considered something better than they are?

Here, a farmer who earns his living in an honest, respectable way has a right to spend his money as he pleases. He can give his family advantages if he chooses. No one quarrels with him, or accuses him of 'aping the country gentleman.'

It is a mistake to suppose that education unfits a person for hard work. In many of our colleges poor students pay for their tuition by the labour of their hands. *They* are not ashamed of it, and any one who would be petty enough to look down on them because of it would be branded as a *snob.*

Furthermore, it cannot be denied that farmers' daughters, who have been well educated, are fit for something higher than the coarse drudgery of farm work.

More servants can be hired if necessary, and the farmer can feel satisfaction in the knowledge, that he is giving employment to those who eagerly desire it.

It is scarcely dignified to show annoyance because social inferiors strive after the refinements of life. Is not this the same spirit that animated the Jews, when they asked: 'From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto Him, that even such mighty works are wrought by His hands? Is not this the *carpenter?*' . . . And they were offended at Him. Shall *we* be offended because our humbler neighbours try to cultivate the gifts and graces God has bestowed on them. No! a thousand times no! Rather let us 'take heed that we despise not one of these little ones.'

VEGA,
Royalton, Vermont, U.S.

QUESTION FOR JANUARY.

Is 'thought-reading' as an amusement harmful and injudicious? (*Suggested.*)

Answers to be sent to Chelsea China, care of the Publishers, before February 1st.

VALE.

The Old Year's a-dying.
Tears and laughter, weal and woe,
Storm and sunshine, joy and sorrow,
(Ah, for the year that's dying!)
Past—they are past like a fall of snow;
We—we only dream of the morrow—
And the Old Year's a-dying.

The Old Year's a-dying.
Words we spoke, and words we heard,
Pains we suffered, wrongs we acted,
(Ah, for the year that's dying!)
Who can recall the bitter word,
Who redeem the griefs exacted?
And the Old Year's a-dying.

The Old Year's a-dying.
Gone we say beyond recall—
New Year comes, the round renewing,
(Ah, for the year that's dying!)
Comes for some, but not for all—
Withered leaves the churchyard strewing;
And the Old Year's a-dying.

The Old Year's a-dying.
Years must come, and years must go,
Time may join, but time shall sever,
(Ah, for the year that's dying!)
We shall pass, like a fall of snow,
Pass away in the dim For-ever—
And the Old Year's a-dying.

The Old Year's a-dying.
Yea, but through the fading years,
All things One unchanging guideth:
(Peace to the year that's dying!)
And beyond the gate of tears
Sorrow passeth, joy abideth,
Though the Old Year's a-dying.

P.

CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY.

The Benedictine Order.

Questions for January.

1. A life of St. Benedict, including some account of his rule.

2. Name a dozen of the greater Benedictine Saints, with a date and two or three lines to identify each, adding their art emblems (if any), and a short life of any one *before* 1085.

3. Name six of the Orders springing from this Order (at any period).

Or,

Give a list of the celebrated Houses of the Order, especially in England and Scotland, and a short description of one.

4. What did the Church owe the monastic Orders of the first eleven centuries?

Answers to be sent to Bog-Oak, care of the Publishers, by February 1st.

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Remarks.

☞ 37. An Œcumenical Council is best defined by *Cocksmoor*, *Kentigern*, *Etheldreda*, *Speranza*, *Water Wagtail*, *Papaver*, *Ierne*, *Violets*, and *Polypodium*. More stress should be laid on Œcumenic acceptance by *Sycorax*, *Verena*, *Malacoda*, and *Countess*. That the Church throughout the world should receive the Decrees was even more important, than that the whole Church should be represented. The Six all stood this test, and were accepted at Constantinople in 691, 879, etc., at Toledo (except the fifth), at Hatfield in 680, Constance, 1416, etc. The first five Councils were also accepted at the Lateran, 649 (and the fifth especially at Jerusalem, 553, and Aquileia, 698). The first four likewise at Braga, 572, London, 1552, 1562 (the fourth especially at Jerusalem, 518, and Chalons, 649); the third also at Milan, 451, Antioch, 433, and many others. For Nicæa we can *point* to Councils accepting it in Rome, Milan, Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, Ephesus, Chalcedon, Jerusalem, Africa, Paris, Toledo, Hertford—in nearly every Province.

Λαμβδα: It *might* take some time before a General Council was generally received, but practically it never took long; but, if all Churches except one or two received the decrees, the one or two would *ipso facto* be heretical, e.g. Armenia never received the decrees of Chalcedon and is heretical. *In one sense* the Council of several Provinces may be called *general*, e.g. of the Roman, African, Eastern Church, if affairs of general interest are discussed, and its decrees meet with a fairly general acceptance in at any rate one part of the Church. Such were the second Nicene Council, 787; Frankfort, 794; and the Councils of Florence and Trent. They were more than Provincial, yet the word Œcumenical cannot be so applied. *Also*, the Decrees only (and not the Canons) can claim this acceptance, except where a Canon embodies a confession of Faith. 'That all and that *only*,' says Veron, 'is of the Catholic Faith, which is revealed in the Word of God, and propounded by the Catholic Church to all, as that which *must* be believed of Divine Faith.' *Frideswide*, *Bluebell*: No Œcumenical Council was ever presided over by a Pope in person, and very few by his Legates. *Mervarid*: Trent was Œcumenic neither in constitution nor in acceptance.

38. Excellent account of Test-words and Creeds by *Etheldreda*, *Erica*, and *Papaver* (whose arrangement is specially clear). Every one should at least have given Homoousion as against Arius; Theotokos, against Nestorius; '*in* Two Natures,' against Eutyches; while 'two natural Wills and modes of operation' was the safeguard against Monothelism; the symbols of Nicæa and Constantinople should have been named; also St. Cyril's second letter to Nestorius, and St. Leo's Tome, which expressed the Faith of Ephesus and Chalcedon respectively. *De Maura*: *Symbolum* was an early word for creed—the Christian's watchword. *Mervarid*: The Athanasian Creed was not adopted by any Œcumenical Council.

39. The quotations from the Athanasian Creed are most reasonably given by *Kentigern*, *Etheldreda*, and *Decima*. A good many of the rest are rather confused. 'Neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance,' has nothing to do with Nestorius, the first half was

the error of the Sabellians, the latter half of Arius. Probably 'not by confusion of the Substance' (against Eutyches), 'but by unity of Person' (against Nestorius), was meant.

40. The life of St. Gregory is very well done, quite admirably by *Cocksmoor*, *Kentigern*, *Etheldreda*, *Water Wagtail*, *Sycorax*, *Bluebell*, *Verena*, *Countess*, *Fidelia*, and *Polypodium*. What does *Decima* mean by saying he was the last canonised Pope? St. Martin I. (653), St. Leo IX. (1054), St. Gregory VII. (1085), St. Celestine (1296), and St. Pius V. (1572) were all canonised, whether they deserved it or not. *Ierne* puts St. Gregory a century too late; *Frideswide* leaves out his visit to Constantinople 577–585. *Erica*, *De Maura*, and others omit all mention of his relations with the Lombards, the Empire, and the Frankish sovereigns. *Heliodora* would be perfect but for leaving out the English Mission. Λαμβδα very good, but does not mention his re-arrangement of Church offices and of that Church music which is still named after him.

Bog-Oak thinks it well in case of new members to recapitulate the Rules. Subjects and Books recommended for 1890 may be found in the 'Monthly Packet' for December, 1889.

RULES.

Answers to the questions are to be written *from memory*, after careful study of the subject. Each question may be studied and answered separately. A dictionary is the only book allowed while writing the answers.

The answers should be written on foolscap paper (one side only), and must not greatly exceed five pages of such paper. They must be signed on each sheet with a *nom-de-plume*, and sent by the first of the month to 'Bog-Oak,' care of the Publishers of the 'Monthly Packet.' Papers not conforming to these regulations are liable to be disqualified.

Subscription to the C. H. S., 1*s.* per annum.

Prizes (in books) will be given in proportion to the numbers who join the Society.

Bog-Oak cannot undertake to return the answers, or to answer privately any letters. The *criticisms* in the 'Monthly Packet' should be read each month.

Subscriptions for 1890 received from *Firenze* and *Gemma*.

Bog-Oak requests any who shall have received prizes two years running to agree to a self-denying ordinance for the work of the coming year, and forego prizes for 1890, should they earn them. She hopes they will work as well, and be still at the head of the Class List.

Notices to Correspondents.

L. S. D.—

MOTTOES ON HOUSES.

'Die Engeln in dem Himmelreich
Verwundern sich alle zugleich;
Dass wir hier bauen Häuser fest
Indem wir sind nur fremde Gäst;
Und wo wir sollen ewig sein
Dort bauen wir gar wenig drein.'

On a house in the Oetzthal, Father Lowder's translation—

'The angels from their thrones on high
Look down on us with wondering eye;
That where we are but passing guests
We build such strong and solid nests;
But where we think to dwell for aye
We scarce take heed a stone to lay.'

C. H. will find her quotation—

'A place in the ranks awaits you,' etc.,

in Miss Procter's 'Legends and Lyrics,' in a poem called 'Now;' also—

'Know that each duty makes its claim,
Open our soul,' etc.,

in another poem, 'Optimus,' in the same book.

THE MUFFIN-MAN.

The author of the following, and where it is to be found?—'God keeps a niche in Heaven to hold our idols; albeit He brake them to our faces,' and in the world that sets this right—'I shall desire more love and knowledge of them, and you.' F. S. P.

S. C. would be very much obliged if any reader of the 'Monthly Packet' could tell her anything of a poem written by a Mr. Christy of Edinburgh, on the text: 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,' and first published about sixty or seventy years ago. *S. C.* can only remember one verse, viz.—

'The watch that ticks so loud—
The winding it for one,
Whose hand lies powerless;
And then the fearful guess,
Ere this hath run?'

Aberystwith.—It is quite possible to do well in classics without mathematical faculty; but that does not prove that the study of Euclid is not very useful, both for the actual knowledge and the habit of close definite reasoning demonstrations require.

A. B. C. would be much obliged to any one who could tell her where to procure a copy of the Rules of the Society called 'The Treasury of God,' or any information about it.

C. H. would be glad to know the author of 'Veni Creator.' Note 346, 'Musings over the Christian Year.'

C. H.—The 'Veni Creator' is attributed to Charlemagne, but the real author is not known.

St. Clementine or Clementina was formerly honoured at Carthage on the 17th December. She must have been a somewhat obscure saint, as there are no further particulars given either in the Dictionnaire Hagiographie, or by Baring-Gould.

St. Clement, Pope and Martyr, 23rd Nov. 100, was the patron saint of Danish and Dutch sailors. E. C. D'ARLEY.

Arachne must apologise for a mistake in stating the proverb for this year. It should be 'Stout heart to Stey Brae,' 'stey' in Scottish meaning steep, not stony.

E. M. E. S. would be glad to know where the following quotations occur:—

'My God, shall I not love Thee
Who gave Thyself for me?
The world may tower above me,
Thou'rt All in All to me.

'Twas in Thy bitter Passion
Thou gavest me Thy Love;
I'll pay Thee in like fashion,
And give Thee, love for Love.'

Also a hymn in which each verse begins—

'Down at Thy Feet, O Lord.'

Also a hymn, the last line of each verse ending with the words—

'Begin again.'

H. M. D. will be grateful to any one who will recommend books on art or history connected with Ravenna.

Work for God.—Ladies with sufficient means to pay for their maintenance will be welcomed at S. Mary's Lodge, Halton, Hastings. For particulars apply to the Superior. The Rev. Canon Sanderson is Chaplain.

Whence come the lines—

'Get up, get up, for shame, the blooming morne,
Upon her wings presents the God unshorne;
See yon Aurora throws her fair
Fresh quilted colours through the air.

'Get up, sweet slug-a-bed, and see
The dew bespangling herbe and tree;
Each flower has wept, and turned towards the East,
Alone an hour since, yet you are not dressed.'

M. G. S.

Miss Cooke would be much obliged for names of good periodicals at 4*d*. or 6*d*. monthly for lads over ten, in Orphanages and elementary schools. Such as 'Boys' own Paper,' and 'Boys' own Magazine,' which have some useful articles, not *only* sensational stories.

The Monthly Packet.

FEBRUARY, 1890.

TWO PENNILESS PRINCESSES.

CHAPTER II.

DEPARTURE.

'I bowed my pride,
A horse-boy in his train to ride.'—*Scott.*

The Lady of Glenuskie, as she was commonly called, was a near kinswoman of the Royal House, Lilias Stewart, a grand-daughter of King Robert II., and thus first cousin to the late King. Her brother, Malcolm Stewart, had resigned to her the little barony of Glenuskie upon his embracing the life of a priest, and her becoming the wife of Sir Patrick Drummond, the son of his former guardian.

Sir Patrick had served in France in the Scotch troop who came to the assistance of the Dauphin, until he was taken prisoner by his native monarch, James I., then present with the army of Henry V. He had then spent two years at Windsor, in attendance upon that prince, until both were set at liberty by the treaty made by Cardinal Beaufort. In the meantime, his betrothed, Lilias, being in danger at home, had been bestowed in the household of the Countess of Warwick, where she had been much with an admirable and saintly foreign lady, Esclairmonde de Luxemburg, who had taken refuge from the dissensions of her own vexed country among the charitable Sisterhood of St. Katharine in the Docks in London.

Sir Patrick and his lady had thus enjoyed far more training in the general European civilisation than usually fell to the lot of their countrymen; and they had moreover imbibed much of the spirit of that admirable King, whose aims at improvement, religious, moral and political, were so piteously cut short by his assassination. During the nine miserable years that had ensued, it had not been possible, even in conjunction with Bishop Kennedy, to afford any efficient support or protection to the young King and his mother, and it had been as much as Sir Patrick could do to protect his own lands and vassals, and do his best to bring up his children to godly, honourable, and chivalrous ways; but amid all the evil around, he had decided that it was well-nigh impossible to train them to courage without ruffianism, or to prevent them from being tainted by the prevailing standard. Even among the clergy and monastic orders, the type was very low, in spite of the endeavours of Bishop Kennedy, who had not yet been able to found his university at St. Andrews; and it had been agreed between him and Sir Patrick that young Malcolm Drummond, a devout and scholarly lad of earnest aspiration, should be trained at the Paris University, and perhaps visit Padua and Bologna in preparation for that foundation, which, save for that cruel Fastern's E'en, would have been commenced by the uncle whose name he bore.

The daughter had likewise been promised in her babyhood to the Sire de Terreforte, a knight of Auvergne, who had come on a mission to the Scotch Court in the golden days of the reign of James I., and being an old companion-in-arms of Sir Patrick, had desired to unite the families in the person of his infant son Olivier and of Annis Drummond.

Lady Drummond had ever since been preparing her little daughter and her wardrobe. The whole was in a good state of forwardness; but it must be confessed that she was somewhat taken aback when she beheld two young ladies riding up the glen with her husband, sons, and their escort; and found, on descending to welcome them, that they were neither more nor less than the two eldest unmarried princesses of Scotland.

'And Dame Lilias,' proceeded her knight, 'you must busk and boune you to be in the saddle betimes the morn, and put Tweed between these puir lassies and their foes—or shall I say their ower well wishers?'

The ladies of Scotland lived to receive startling intelligence, and Lady Drummond's kind heart was moved by the two forlorn, weary-looking figures, with traces of tears on their cheeks. She kissed them respectfully, conducted them to the guest-chamber, which was many advances beyond their room at Dunbar in comfort, and presently left her own two daughters, Annis and Lilias, and their nurse, to take care of them, since they seemed to have neither mails nor attendants of their own, while she sought out her husband, as he was being disarmed by his sons, to understand what was to be done.

He told her briefly of the danger and perplexity in which the presence of the two poor young princesses might involve themselves, their brother, and the kingdom itself, by exciting the greed, jealousy, and emulation of the untamed nobles and Highland chiefs, who would try to gain them, both as an excuse for exactions from the King and out of jealousy of one another. To take them out of reach was the only ready means of preventing mischief, and the Bishop of St. Andrews had besought Sir Patrick to undertake the charge.

'We are bound to do all we can for their father's daughters,' Dame

Lilias owned, 'alike as our King and the best friend that ever we had, or my dear brother Malcolm, Heaven rest them both! but have they no servants, no plenishing?'

'That must we provide,' said Sir Patrick. 'We must be their servants, Dame. Our lasses must lend them what is fitting, till we come where I can make use of this, which my good Lord of St. Andrews gave me.'

'What is it, Patie? Not the red gold?'

'Oh, no! I have heard of the like. Ye ken Morini, as they call him, the Lombard goldsmith in the Canongate? Weel, for sums that the Bishop will pay to Morini, sums owing, he says, by himself to the Crown—though I shrewdly suspect 'tis the other way, gude man!—then the Lombard's fellows in York, London, or Paris, or Bourges, will, on seeing this bit bond, supply us up to the tune of a hundred crowns. Thou lookst mazed, Lily, but I have known the like before. 'Tis no great sum, but mayhap the maidens' English kin will do somewhat for them before they win to their sister.'

'I would not have them beholden to the English,' said Dame Lilias, not forgetting that she was a Stewart.

Her husband perhaps scarcely understood the change made in the whole aspect of the journey to her. Not only had she to hurry her preparations for the early start, but instead of travelling as the mistress of the party, she and her daughter would, in appearance at least, be the mere appendages of the two princesses, wait upon them, give them the foremost place, supply their present needs from what was provided for themselves, and it was quite possible have likewise to control girlish petulance and inexperience in the strange lands where her charges must appear at their very best, to do honour to their birth and their country.

But the loyal woman made up her mind without a word of complaint after the first shock, and though a busy night was not the best preparation for a day's journey, she never lay down; nor indeed did her namesake daughter, who was to be left at a Priory on their way, there to decide whether she had a vocation to be a nun.

So effectually did she bestir herself that by six o'clock the next morning the various packages were rolled up for bestowal on the sumpter horses, and the goods to be left at home locked up in chests, and committed to the charge of the trusty seneschal and his wife; a meal, to be taken in haste, was spread on the table in the hall, to be swallowed while the little rough ponies were being laden. Mass was to be heard at the first halting-place, the Benedictine nunnery of Trefontana on Lammermuir, where Lilias Drummond was to be left, to be passed on, when occasion served, to the Sisterhood at Edinburgh.

The fresh morning breezes over the world of heather brightened the cheeks and the spirits of the two sisters; the first wrench of parting was over with them, and they found themselves treated with much more observance than usual, though they did not know that the horses they were riding had been trained for the special use of the Lady of Glenuskie and her daughter Annis upon the journey.

They rode on gaily, Jean with her inseparable falcon, Skywing, Eleanor with her father's harp bestowed behind her—she would trust it to no one else. They were squired by their two cousins, David and Malcolm, who, in spite of David's murmurs, felt the exhilaration of the future as much as they did, as they coursed over the heather, David with two great greyhounds with majestic heads at his side, Finn and Fiüvola as they were called.

The graver and sadder ones of the party, father, mother, and the two young sisters, rode farther back, the father issuing directions to the seneschal, who accompanied them thus far, and the mother watching over the two fair young girls, whose hearts were heavy in the probability that they would never meet again, for how should a Scottish Benedictine nun and the wife of a French seigneur ever come together? nor would there be any possibility of correspondence to bridge over the gulf.

The nunnery was strong, but not with the strength of secular buildings, for except when a tempting heiress had taken refuge there, convents were respected even by the rudest men.

Numerous unkempt and barely-clothed figures were coming away from the gates, a pilgrim or two with brown gown, broad hat and scallop shell, the morning's dole being just over; but a few, some on crutches, some with heads or limbs bound up, were waiting for their turn of the sister-infirmarer's care. The pennon of the Drummond had already been recognised, and the gate-ward readily admitted the party, since the house of Glenuskie were well known as pious benefactors to the Church.

They were just in time for a mass which a pilgrim priest was about to say, and they were all admitted to the small nave of the little chapel, beyond which, a screen shut off the choir of nuns. After this, the ladies were received into the refectory to break their fast, the men folk being served in an outside building for the purpose. It was not sumptuous fare, chiefly consisting of barley bannocks and very salt and dry fish, with some thin and sour ale; and David's attention was a good deal taken up by a man-at-arms who seemed to have attached himself to the party, but whom he did not know, and who held a little aloof from the rest—keeping his visor down while eating and drinking, in a somewhat suspicious manner, as though to avoid observation.

Just as David had resolved to point this person out to his father, Sir Patrick was summoned to speak to the Lady Prioress. Therefore the youth thought it incumbent upon him to deal with the matter, and advancing towards the stranger, said, 'Good fellow, thou art none of our following. How, now!' for a pair of grey eyes looked up with recognition in them, and a low voice whispered, 'Davie Drummond, keep my secret till we be across the Border.'

'Archie, what means this?'

'I canna let her gang! I ken that she scorns me.'

'That proud peat Jean?'

'Whist! whist! She scorns me, and the King scarce lent a lug to my father's gude offer, so that he can scarce keep the peace with their pride and upsettingness. But I love her, Davie, the mere sight of her is sunshine, and wha kens but in the stour of this journey I may have the chance of standing by her and defending her, and showing what a leal Scot's heart can do? Or if not, if I may not win her, I shall still be in sight of her blessed blue een!'

David whistled his perplexity. 'The Yerl,' said he, 'doth he ken?'

'I trow not! He thinks me at Tantallon, watching for the raid the Mackays are threatening—little guessing the bird would be flown.'

'How cam ye to guess that same, which was, so far as I know, only decided two days syne?'

'Our pursuivant was to bear a letter to the King, and I garred him let me bear him company as one of his grooms, so that I might delight mine eyes with the sight of her.'

David laughed. His time was not come, and this love and admiration for his young cousin was absurd in his eyes. 'For a young bit lassie,' he said; 'gin it had been a knight! But what will your father say to mine?'

'I will write to him when I am well over the Border,' said Archie, 'and gin he kens that your father had no hand in it, he will deem no ill-will. Nor could he harm you if he did.'

David did not feel entirely satisfied, on one side of his mind as to his own loyalty to his father, or Archie's to 'the Yerl,' and yet there was something diverting to the enterprising mind in the stolen expedition; and the fellow-feeling which results in honour to contemporaries, made him promise not to betray the young man and to shield him from notice as best he might. With Archie's motive he had no sympathy, having had too many childish squabbles with his cousin for her to be in his eyes a sublime Princess Joanna, but only a masterful Jeanie.

Sir Patrick, absorbed in orders to his seneschal, did not observe the addition to his party; and as David acted as his squire, and had been seen talking to the young man, no further demur was made until the time when the home party turned to ride back to Glenuskie, and Sir Patrick made a roll-call of his followers, picked men who could fairly be trusted not to embroil the company by excesses or imprudences in England or France.

The party numbered, besides himself, his wife, sons, and daughters, and the two princesses, Christian, female attendant for the ladies, the wife of Andrew of the Cleugh, an elderly, well-seasoned man-at arms, to whom the banner was entrusted; of Dandie their son, a stalwart youth of two- or three-and-twenty, who, under his father, was in charge of the horses; and six lances besides, Sir Patrick following the French fashion, which gave to each lance, two grooms, armed likewise, and a horse-boy. For each of the family there was likewise a spare palfry, with a servant in charge, and one beast of burthen, but these last were to be freshly hired with their attendants at each stage.

Archie, used to more tumultuous and irregular gatherings, where any man with a good horse and serviceable weapons was welcome to join the raid, had not reckoned on such a review of the party as was made by the old warrior accustomed to more regular warfare, and who made each of his eight lances, namely, the two Andrew Drummonds, Jock of the Glen, Jockie of Braeside, Willie and Norman Armstrong, Wattie Wudspurs, and Tam Telfer, answer to their names, and show up their three followers.

'And who is yon lad in bright steel?' Sir Patrick asked.

'Master Davie kens, sir,' responded old Andrew.

David being called, explained that he was a leal lad, called Archie, whom he had seen in Edinburgh, and who wished to join them, go to France and see the world under Sir Patrick's guidance, and that he would be at his own charges. 'And I'll be answerable for him, sir,' concluded the lad.

'Answer! Ha! ha! What for, eh? That he is a long-legged lad like your ain self. What more? Come, call him up!'

The stranger had no choice save to obey, and came up on a strong white mare, which old Andrew scanned, and muttered to his son, 'The Mearns breed—did he come honestly by it?'

'Up with your beaver, young man,' said Sir Patrick peremptorily; 'no man rides with me whose face I have not seen.'

A face not handsome and thoroughly Scottish was disclosed, with keen intelligence in the grey eyes, and a certain air of offended dignity, yet self-control, in the close-shut mouth. The cheeks were sunburnt and freckled, a tawny down of young manhood was on the long upper lip, and the short cut hair was red; but there was an intelligent and trustworthy expression in the countenance, and the tall figure sat on horseback with the upright ease of one well-trained.

'Soh!' said Sir Patrick, looking him over, 'how ca' they you, lad?'

'Archie o' the Red Peel,' he answered.

'That's a bye-name,' said the knight sternly; 'I must have the full name of any man who rides with me.'

'Archibald Douglas, then, if nothing short of that will content you!'

'Are ye sib to the Earl?'

'Ay, sir, and have rid in his company.'

'Whose word am I to take for that?'

'Mine, sir, a word that none has ever doubted,' said the youth boldly. 'Bye that, your son kens me.'

David here vouched for having seen the young man in the Angus following, when he had accompanied his father in the last riding of the Scots Parliament at Edinburgh; and this so far satisfied Sir Patrick that he consented to receive the stranger into his company, but only on condition of an oath of absolute obedience so long as he remained in the troop.

David could see that this had not been reckoned on by the high-spirited Master of Angus; and indeed obedience, save to the head of the name, was so little a Scottish virtue that Sir Patrick was by no means unprepared for reluctance.

'I give thee thy choice, laddie,' he said, not unkindly; 'best make up your mind while thou art still in thine own country, and can win back home. In England and France, I can have no stragglers nor loons like to help themselves, nor give cause for a fray to bring shame on the haill troop in lands that are none too friendly. A raw carle like thysell, or even these lads of mine, might give offence unwittingly, and then I'd have to give thee up to the laws, or to stand by thee to the peril of all, and of the ladies themselves. So there's nothing for it but strict keeping to orders of myself and Andrew Drummond of the Cleugh, who kens as well as I do what sorts to be done in these strange lands. Wilt thou so bind thyself, or shall we part while yet there is time?'

'Sir, I will,' said the young man, 'I will plight my word to obey you, and faithfully, so long as I ride under your banner in foreign parts—provided such oath be not binding within this realm of Scotland, nor against my lealty to the head of my name.'

'Nor do I ask it of thee,' returned Sir Patrick heartily, but regarding him more attentively; 'these are the scruples of a true man. Hast thou any following?'

'Only a boy to lead my horse to grass,' replied Archibald, giving a peculiar whistle, which brought to his side a shock-headed, barefooted lad, in a shepherd's tartan and little else, but with limbs as active as a wild deer, and an eye twinkling and alert.

'He shall be put in better trim ere the English pock-puddings see him,' said Douglas, looking at him, perhaps for the first time, as something unsuited to that orderly company.

'That is thine own affair,' said Sir Patrick. 'Mine is that he should comport himself as becomes one of my troop. What's his name?'

'Ringan Raefoot,' replied Archie.

Sir Patrick began to put the oath of obedience to him, but the boy cried out—

'I'll ne'er swear to any save my lawful lord, the Yerl of Angus, and my lord the Master.'

'Hist, Ringan,' interposed Archie. 'Sir, I will answer for his faith to me, and so long as he is leal to me, he will be the same to thee; but I doubt whether it be expedient to compel him.'

So did Sir Patrick, and he said—

'Then be it so, I trust to his faith to thee. Only remembering that if he plunder or brawl, I may have to leave him hanging on the next bush.'

'And if he doth, the Red Douglas will ken the reason why,' quoth Ringan, with head aloft.

It was thought well to turn a deaf ear to this observation. Indeed, Archie's effort was to elude observation, and to keep his uncouth follower from attracting it. Ringan was not singular in running along with bare feet. Other 'bonnie boys,' as the ballad has it, trotted along by the side of the horses to which they were attached in the like fashion, though they had hose and shoon slung over their shoulders, to be donned on entering the good town of Berwick-upon-Tweed.

Not without sounding of bugle and sending out a pursuivant to examine into the intentions and authorisation of the party, were they admitted, Jean and Eleanor riding first, with the pursuivant proclaiming—'Place, place for the high and mighty Princesses of Scotland.'

It was an inconvenient ceremony for poor Sir Patrick, who had to hand over to the pursuivant, in the name of the Princesses, a ring from his own finger. Largesse he could not attempt, but the proud spirit of himself and his train could not but be chafed at the expectant faces of the crowd, and the intuitive certainty that 'Beggarly Scotch' was in every disappointed mind.

And this was but a foretaste of what the two royal maidens' presence would probably entail throughout the journey. His wife added to this care, uneasiness as to the deportment of her three maidens. Of Annis, she had not much fear, but she suspected Jean and Eleanor of being as wild and untamed as hares, and she much doubted whether any counsels might not offend their dignity, and drive them into some strange behaviour that the good people of Berwick would never forget.

They rode in, however, very upright and stately, with an air of taking possession of the place on their brother's behalf; and Jean bowed with a certain haughty grace to the deputy-warden who came out to receive them, Eleanor keeping her eye upon Jean and imitating her in everything. For Eleanor, though sometimes the most eager, and most apt to commit herself by hasty words and speeches, seemed now to be daunted by the strangeness of all around, and to commit herself to the leading of her sister, though so little her junior.

She was very silent all through the supper spread for them in the hall of the castle, while Jean exchanged conversation with their host upon Iceland hawks and wolf and deerhounds, as if she had been a young lady keeping a splendid court all her life, instead of a poverty-stricken prisoner in castle after castle.

'Jeanie,' whispered Eleanor, as they lay down on their bed together, 'didst mark the tall laddie that was about to seat himself at the high table and frowned when the steward motioned him down?'

'What's that to me? An ill-nurtured carle,' said Jean; 'I marvel Sir Patie brooks him in his meinee!'

Eleanor was a little in awe of Jeanie in this mood, and said no more, but Annis, who slept on a pallet at their feet, heard all, and guessed more as to the strange young squire.

Fain would she and Eleanor have discussed the situation, but Jean's blue eyes glanced heedfully and defiantly at them, and, moreover, the young gentleman in question, after that one error, effaced himself, and was forgotten for the time in the novelty of the scenes around.

The sub-Warden of Berwick, mindful of his charge to obviate all occasions of strife, insisted on sending a knight and half-a dozen men to escort the Scottish travellers as far as Durham. David Drummond and the young ladies murmured to one another their disgust that the English pock-pudding should not suppose Scots able to keep their heads with their own hands; but, as Jean sagely observed, 'No doubt he would not wish them to have occasion to hurt any of the English, nor Jamie to have to call them to account.'

This same old knight consorted with Sir Patrick, Dame Lilias, and Father Romuald, and kept a sharp eye on the little party, allowing no straggling on any pretence, and as Sir Patrick enforced the command, all were obliged to obey, in spite of chafing; and the scowls of the English Borderers, with the scant courtesy vouchsafed by these sturdy spirits, proved the wisdom of the precaution.

At Durham they were hospitably entertained in the absence of the Bishop. The splendour of the cathedral and its adjuncts much impressed Lady Drummond, as it had done a score of years previously; but, though Malcolm ventured to share her admiration, Jean was far above allowing that she could be astonished at anything in England. In fact, she regarded the stately towers of St. Cuthbert as so much stolen family property which 'Jamie' would one day regain; and all the other young people followed suit. David even made all the observations his own sense of honour and the eyes of his hosts would permit, with a view to a future surprise. The escort of Sir Patrick was asked to York by a Canon who had to journey thither, and was anxious for protection from the outlaws—who had begun to renew the doings of Robin Hood under the laxer rule of the young Henry VI., though things were expected to be better since the young Duke of York had returned from France.

Perhaps this arrangement was again a precaution for the preservation of peace, and at York there was a splendid entertainment by

Cardinal Kemp; but all the 'subtleties' and wonders, stags' heads in their horns, peacocks in their pride, jellies with whole romances depicted in them, could not reconcile the young Scots to the presumption of the Archbishop reckoning Scotland into his province. Durham was at once too monastic and too military to have afforded much opportunity for recruiting the princesses' wardrobe; but York was the resort of the merchants of Flanders, and Christie was sent in quest of them and their wares, for truly the black serge kirtles and shepherd's tartan screens that had made the journey from Dunbar were in no condition to do honour to royal damsels.

Jean was in raptures with the graceful veils depending from the horned head-gear, worn, she was told, by the Duchess of Burgundy; but Eleanor wept at the idea of obscuring the snood of a Scottish maiden, and would not hear of resigning it.

'I feel as Elleen no more,' she said, 'but a mere Flanders popinjay. It has changed my ain self upon me, as well as the country.'

'Thou shouldst have been born in a hovel!' returned Jean, raising her proud little head. 'I feel more than ever what I am—a true princess!'

And she looked it, with beauty enhanced by the rich attire which only made Eleanor embarrassed and uncomfortable.

Malcolm, the more scrupulous of the Drummond brothers, begged of Archibald Douglas, when at Durham, to write to his father and declare himself to Sir Patrick, but the youth would do neither. He did not think himself sufficiently out of reach, and, besides, the very sight of a pen was abhorrent to him. There was something pleasing to him in the liberty of a kind of volunteer attached to the expedition, and he would not give it up. Nor was he without some wild idea of winning Jean's notice by some gallant exploit on her behalf before she knew him for the object of her prejudice, the Master of Angus. As to Sir Patrick, he was far too busy trying to compose Border quarrels and gleaning information about the Gloucester and Beaufort parties at Court to have any attention to spare for the young man riding in his suite with the barefooted lad ever at his stirrup.

Archie never attempted to secure better accommodation than the other lances; he groomed his steed himself, with a little assistance from Ringan, and slept in the straw of its bed, with the lad curled up at his feet; the only difference observable between him and the rest being that he always groomed himself every night and morning as carefully as the horse, a ceremony they thought entirely needless.

(To be continued.)

GEOF.

BY THE HONOURABLE EVA KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN.

CHAPTER I.

'I WONDER if Auntie's got a cold,' said Geof to himself. 'That's the second time she's taken her handkerchief out of her pocket. People don't have colds in their eyes—she's crying *I* believe. What *can* Auntie have to cry for? I don't think people *ought* to cry in church—they can't attend properly if they do.' This suggested to Geof the idea that perhaps he was not attending quite properly himself, so he knelt up straightly on his footstool, and frowned very hard at his Prayer-book, which he could not read very well as yet, and said Amen quite loud at the end of the next prayer.

But he could not help peeping round to see if Auntie were still crying, and presently a brilliant idea occurred to him. 'I'll take her handkerchief, and then she *can't*,' he thought, with an odd confounding of cause and effect, and the next time Auntie's pocket-handkerchief was laid down, Geof's little brown hand made a sudden snatch, and in another minute had disappeared in the pocket of his sailor suit. 'Now I shall be able to attend,' thought Geof, who was rather a conscientious little boy, and really wished to do his duty as it presented itself to his small mind. 'I wish they'd give out the hymn,' was the next irrelevant thought, 'then I could cough.' He was trying very hard not to cough; he got quite red in the face with trying, and it really was rather hard that there happened to be such a long heading to the hymn, for that just prevented him from holding out till the organ began to play, and so, at almost the quietest moment in the whole service, while people were still finding their places, his cough came, a very loud noisy cough, and a choke as well, the result of his manful efforts to avoid either. Whatever Geof did, was done with great energy; if he laughed, he laughed very loud, if he cried, he roared with all his might, if he sang—well, if he happened to know the tune, it was very nice, but if he did not, he sang out just the same, and then sometimes it was really rather trying. And so with his cough. It made everybody near turn round to see what was the matter with that poor little boy, and Aunt Muriel felt quite uncomfortable. 'Geof, dear!' she whispered in rather a reproachful tone, as the hymn began. She had so often told him to try and put off coughing till he could not be heard, and she did not know how very hard he *had* tried this time. She popped a lozenge into his mouth, and as he sucked it a brilliant idea entered his head. Perhaps Aunt Muriel was crying about *him*, perhaps she thought his cough was so bad that he was going to die. A cough must be bad, argued Geof, to make such a noise as his did. And he knew people sometimes did die of coughs. But still—somehow he did not think he was going to die. He was not sure, but he fancied that if he were, he would not feel quite so hungry as he did, nor so anxious that the sermon, which had now begun, might not be a very long one, so that, in spite of his hunger, he might have time for a good race along the Lees before dinner. If he were going to die, he would probably care far more about the sermon than about dinner. But of course Auntie did not know how hungry he was—he must tell her, and then she would not be so anxious about him. So he pulled her sleeve. 'Auntie,' he said in a loud whisper, 'I'm so hungry—I——' but she did not let him go on.

'Darling,' she whispered, 'you *must* not talk in church. Try and attend, Geof dear, but if you can't understand the sermon you may read some hymns.' Geof heaved a deep sigh. She did not understand the least, he thought. Well, he must wait till they got outside. So he took his hymn-book and read the hymns he knew, until the sermon came to an end, and they found themselves in the churchyard, with the fresh sea-breeze blowing straight in their faces. 'It *does* feel nice!' said Geof, drawing a long breath. 'I don't think I like church air—oh, I see your chairman, Aunt Muriel. I'll run and tell him you're ready!' 'I don't believe a boy that was going to die could run so fast,' he thought to himself as he tore along. 'But still I may be all the same.' The bath-chair arrived; Aunt Muriel got in, and Geof walked by the side. He had to take very long strides, and he got very much out of breath, for he was only seven years old (seven and a half, as he was very particular to say). However, as nothing offended him so much as the suggestion that he should get into the chair too, his aunt only insisted upon his doing so when it was very wet, or she was in a great hurry, so that he really could not keep up. He was a stout, squarely built little boy, not tall for his age, though he was often taken for older by reason of his sturdy independent ways and adventurous pranks, which were always exciting the alarm of his Aunt Muriel, and the wrath of her housekeeper, Mrs. Gregory. 'Auntie!' gasped Geof, breaking into a jog trot that he might get quite up by her side; 'Auntie, I think my cough's much better. I really do.'

'I'm glad of it, Geof dear, I wish it had not taken the opportunity to get so much worse in church!'

'No—but, Auntie,' said Geof, 'that wasn't anything. That was because of the hymn, the long thing at the beginning of it, I mean, you know. And my cough really is better, and I'm ever so hungry!'

'Well, dear, there's roast beef for you at home. Don't you think you can wait till we get home, Geoffrey?'

'Oh *yes*,' cried Geof, quite impatiently. It was very odd, he thought, that she would not see his point, 'when she was crying about it in church, too!'

'Yes, but I mean—I don't *think* I'm going to die!'

He looked so extremely unlike it, as he tramped along with his sailor hat well at the back of his close-cropped dark head, and his fat, round face aglow with exercise, that his aunt could not help laughing, as she pinched the cheek nearest to her, and patted the wiry little hand that had got such a firm grip of her chair.

'Neither do I, Geof dear!' she said. 'Whatever put such an idea into your funny little head?'

'Oh, well, ah,' said Geof, blushing furiously, and looking rather crestfallen at the downfall of his theory.

He felt a certain delicacy in telling her what had suggested the idea to him. He himself was terribly ashamed if anybody caught him crying, and probably Aunt Muriel would feel just the same. She had wanted to cry quite quietly, without anybody seeing her, and he had watched! What a mean thing to do. 'If only I had attended all the time,' he thought, 'I shouldn't have seen. But the morning service *is* so long!'

'Well, Geof,' said his aunt, 'what was it? What made you think of such a thing?'

'Oh, nothing particular. Only people *do* die, you know!'

'Quite true, dear boy. But not often when they are as strong and rosy and hungry as *you* are, Geof. Come, tell me the real reason. What can have have made you imagine you were so ill?'

'Well,' said Geof, blurting it out with a desperate effort, 'you cried in church, and so I thought you wouldn't if I wasn't.' He held his head high up and turned away from Aunt Muriel. She might begin to cry again, he thought—or perhaps be very angry, though she was not often that. He need not have feared either calamity.

'You are a very funny little boy, Geof,' she said gently. 'But you may set your mind quite at ease. I am not at all anxious about the state of your health! And I think if you had looked at your prayer-book a little more, and at me——'

'A little less!' cried Geof, turning his face towards her, and feeling much relieved. 'I thought of that myself. Well, I'm very glad it wasn't me. And I'm *dreadfully* sorry I saw,' he added remorsefully.

'Never mind that, Geof dear,' said his aunt. 'You see, you are not a very big boy yet.'

('*Pretty* big,' murmured Geof, in a tone of remonstrance.)

'Well, only "pretty big," at all events, and so you don't always quite know the right thing to do. And you don't know either that sometimes people are unhappy about things that happened quite a long time ago, or else perhaps you would not have thought of such a good reason for unhappiness in the present.'

'A long time ago? Will you tell me about that, ever?' asked Geof, scenting a story.

'Well, perhaps we might talk about it a little this evening, when we are quite quiet together. But it is rather sad, Geof!'

'I like sad things, I like sad things!' cried Geof, hopping first on one leg, then on the other, in an extremely cheerful fashion. What he meant was that he liked any kind of a story. His aunt knew that, and smiled.

'Well, we will see!' she said. 'But here we are, almost at home. Off with you, Geof, and ring the bell!'

Geof flew to obey her, his heart considerably lightened; 'for I don't want to die,' he thought. 'And I *am* so hungry!'

CHAPTER II.

THREE o'clock found Geof again walking down the Lees on his way to church. His afternoon church-going was in one way more, and in another way, less, to his mind than that of the morning. He liked the service, which, being especially for children, included plenty of hymns which he knew, and could sing loudly, and ended with a short catechising by the Vicar, who knew well how to interest little boys and girls, and was sure to tell them one story at least during the three-quarters of an hour they were in church.

On the other hand, he did not approve of the Sunday afternoon substitute for Aunt Muriel, Mrs. Gregory, her housekeeper, as has been said before, and Geof's attendant as well. She had been in the family for years, but though her devotion to all its members was of course extended to Geof, he had been, as she phrased it, 'such a young handful' ever since, after his mother's death, he had been sent over from India by his father, that the said devotion was expressed rather in vigorous efforts to train him up in the way he should go, than in a lavish display of affection, or in anything which bore the remotest resemblance to spoiling. Perhaps she had been rather too old to undertake the charge of a child, but 'it was not likely,' as she said, 'that she was going to give Mr. George's baby up to any one else,' nor would Aunt Muriel have felt the same confidence in a strange nurse. So Geof's Ayah went back to India, and a series of struggles began between Geof and Gregory. 'Miss Muriel 'd spoil that boy, if she had him to herself,' Gregory would say to her friends. 'It's lucky there's me to prevent it, as his poor papa's away.'

And sometimes, when matters grew very serious, she would take the law into her own hands, and administer a whipping. Aunt Muriel was very unhappy on such occasions, and, strictly speaking, did not sanction them, but Gregory did not consult her, and the effect was so undeniably good, that it appeared better not to interfere with her discipline. Down the Lees they tramped together, Gregory holding Geof's small hand tightly clasped in her's; there was no knowing what pranks he might not be up to if she let him go, and get him safely and punctually to church she must. In good time they arrived, and took their places in the nave, crowded with children as it was, first the National School children, girls on one side, boys on the other, each class with its own teacher, and then the other little residents in, or visitors to, Folkestone, under the charge of mother, elder sister, governess, or nurse, as the case might be.

For one contingent Geof was eagerly on the look-out, and this was a school of little boys who had ever since he first came to Folkestone, several years ago, excited his keenest interest. They were quite little fellows, the eldest not above ten years old, and they were all dressed alike in sailor suits, very like Geof's own, with red caps like those sometimes worn by French fishermen. Their school was a red-brick building out on the high cliffs between Folkestone and Sandgate, and Geof's greatest delight was to persuade Gregory to take him out walking in that direction, that he might watch them playing cricket or football in their playground. Lucky, lucky boys they were, he thought, the youngest of them certainly not bigger than himself, and yet at school! For, from the time he was quite a little child, almost before he left off his petticoats, the one absorbing desire of Geof's heart had been to be a schoolboy; instead of learning to read and write from a governess like a little girl, to learn Greek and Latin, and manly things of that kind; instead of walking out with Gregory, to play with other boys in a field, to be called 'Hope' instead of 'Geof,' and put himself to bed, all this would be glory and joy indeed! And it was not for him till he should be nine years old; such was his father's decision—two long, long years to wait. Geof craned his head round this way and that until the little troop of boys came in, escorted by their master, and filed into two pews reserved for them between the National Schools, and what Geof called the 'family' children. There were only twenty of them in all, Geof knew, for he had counted them over and over again; still count them again he must, for it was a whole year since he had seen them. No; there were only nineteen after all. How was that? Could one of them have a cold? Did schoolboys ever have such stupid things as colds? At any rate, *they* wouldn't be kept in for them, as he was sometimes. But now the first hymn was being given out, and Gregory was putting his hymn-book into his hand, with a nudge to indicate that he was looking about him too much. It was a hymn he was very fond of—

'I love to hear the story
Which angel voices tell,'

and he sang it with all his might, as indeed did all the children, who knew it so well that they quite ran away from the organ more than once; then came a metrical litany, which he liked too, and then the catechising, which he was rather anxious to hear, as this being his first Sunday at Folkestone since last year, of course he did not know what it was going to be about.

It proved to be about King Solomon, and how he chose to be very wise and rule his people well, rather than to be rich, or to live a long time, or to be revenged upon his enemies. Which did the children think would have been the worst thing to wish? the Vicar asked, as he walked slowly down the nave, between the long rows of children, stopping whenever he saw a hand held out to denote that its owner had something to say. Some said one thing, and some another, but the Vicar said he thought the only really wrong wish would have been to be revenged upon his enemies—that was such a dreadful thing to wish!

Geof's heart rather smote him as he remembered how he had hidden Gregory's best pincushion the last time she had sent him early to bed, and he thought he would get it out of the coal-hole, and put it back in her work-box the very next chance he had. 'For of course Gregory is my worst bad enemy,' thought Geof. 'And I couldn't have taken a bigger revenge than that pincushion—unless I bagged her photograph of Auntie, and gave it moustaches. *I'll do that next time.*'

The Vicar was asking a question: did any one remember another instance of a choice being given, and a choice made? to whom was the choice given, and what had it been?

Of course Geof knew! why, Auntie had told him the story only yesterday. No time to be lost or another child would speak. 'The batter-pudding!' he shouted, jumping up in his seat, his face quite red with the excitement and joy of having actually made an answer, without preparation from Auntie beforehand. Gregory pulled him down, and there was a titter all through the church. Geof looked up in surprise and consternation; the Vicar was standing quite close to his pew, and he was smiling a good deal.

'Well, no, not exactly the batter-pudding,' he said. 'I was not thinking of that, although that story, which no doubt you all know, is certainly meant to show how easily people may wish for very foolish things, and how very silly it is. Now there's nothing to laugh at, children, the little boy who answered made a mistake, that is all. And I would rather you answered wrongly, than not at all. Anybody can hold his tongue, but it isn't everybody, I am sorry to say, who will speak out what he thinks, so that he may be put right. Now I wonder who can tell me of whom it was that I was really thinking? It was some one belonging to the same family as Solomon.'

Of course this hint caused a whole forest of hands to be stretched out, and a chorus of voices to cry, 'David,' and then the Vicar talked a great deal about David, and how he chose the very bad plague for his people, rather than that they should be defeated by their enemies, because it was better to fall into the hand of God than into the hand of men. After that he talked about the things that people wish for now, and especially children; how they set their hearts upon some treat or pleasure, and think about nothing else, and how often it makes them quite naughty, especially if, after all, they are disappointed, and do not get what they want. And then he told some stories about people who had wished very much for things, and then would afterwards have given anything not to have them, because they had brought with them such misfortunes. For instance, one man had wanted very much indeed to be rich, and had worked hard all his life that his children might be in a better position than himself. Then when he had succeeded, and got every possible comfort and luxury for them, his sons did not care anything about him at all, but despised him because he had once been a common workman, and they had been brought up to do nothing. And so, when it was no use, that man wished he had been contented, when he was in a cottage, and had just enough to live upon, and his children cared about him, and were not proud. The Vicar said that in a poem by an old Roman, written a great many years ago, there were some lines beginning—

'Are mortals, then, to long for nothing?'

and the poet had answered the question very wisely, and said that the thing to wish for was to be wise and good, and if that was what he thought, certainly we, who are Christians, ought to think so even more.

Perhaps, the Vicar said, some of the schoolboys present would read that poem some day—he hoped they would, for the poet was a great favourite with himself—and then they might remember what he had told them. Geof wondered whether *he* should ever read it, and wondered what the Vicar would think about his own great wish.

'Let this be the rule,' he said, last of all, 'not to set your whole heart upon anything which you are not quite sure will be good when you get it. Of course you can't help wishing for this and that. I know that well enough; but what I say is, not with your whole heart. And I don't think one can be quite sure in that way about anything but goodness, and wisdom, and courage, and truth. Wish for those, dear children, as much as you will! and with your *whole* hearts.'

There was another hymn, and the service came to an end. Geof was very busy thinking.

'I *know* it's good to go to school,' he thought. 'And it makes one brave to fight with other boys, and that was one of the things he said. I *do* want to go to school, I do, I do!'

'Now, Geof, mind where you're walking to.' Gregory was vexed. Geof had marched straight though a puddle, and his Sunday trousers were splashed. She spoke sharply, and Geof's ire was aroused.

'You're not to call me Geof! You're to say Master Geof. You can call Peter "Peter" (Peter was the page-boy), but gentlemen are always called Master Geof.'

'Very well, sir, if a gentleman you are, like a gentleman you ought to act. I don't see no sign of that—walking through puddles with your best suit on. And I'm sure, after all the beautiful words you've heard in church——'

'The Vicar never said anything about puddles,' interrupted Geof. 'Not one word.'

And he walked straight through another, sad to relate.

'Now, Geof, give me your hand.'

'I won't!' but Gregory was too quick for him, and in a minute had his small wriggling paw firmly held in her tight black kid grasp, and was proceeding in triumph up the Lees. Geof saw that he must have recourse to stratagem. His broad-brimmed sailor hat was fastened under his chin by a bit of elastic; this, by a downward duck of the head, and violent opening and shutting of his mouth, he succeeded in slipping upwards, without exciting Gregory's ever-ready suspicion by the use of his other hand. Then it was easy to accomplish his object, a little backward jerk, and 'Oh, Gregory, my hat!' cried Master Geof.

With an exclamation of annoyance, Gregory turned to pick it up from the puddle into which (of course) it had fallen. Geof's hand was free!

'Hurrah! Hurrah!' he shouted, dancing and skipping round her like a little maniac, and totally oblivious of the fact that he and Gregory were not the only people out on the Lees. Geof often was apt to forget that he could be both seen and heard by others, unlike some children who fall into the opposite mistake of supposing that everybody is looking at them—both of which ideas sometimes lead to disagreeable consequences. Very disagreeable indeed, poor Gregory thought it, as she stood there with the dripping hat in her hand, and noticed how many people had turned round on hearing Geof's shouts, and were smiling at the antics of the naughty little boy.

She made a grab at his arm, but he wrenched it away, crying—

'You hurt me, Gregory! I say, you hurt me! Medicine's your name, and medicine you are, you horrid, nasty thing!'

'Very well, Master Geoffrey,' said Gregory, with another and successful grab, which restored Geof to the position of a prisoner at her side. 'Very well, sir, you know what to expect.'

'You can't whip me on Sunday. It's wrong,' said Geof firmly.

'We shall see about that,' she said grimly, and gave him a little shake, as she walked on faster than ever.

'Oh, bother,' thought Geof. 'Now I sha'n't have the nice thing for tea.'

He was not a greedy little boy, but he did like jam, and Aunt

Muriel invariably withheld it, when he had been rude to Gregory during the day.

On Sunday too, there were sometimes muffins or sponge-cakes; hence the general designation of the 'nice thing,' which obviously excluded bread-and-butter, or bread-and-milk. Geof heaved a deep sigh. Here they were at number twenty-three. Peter opened the door, and Gregory marched upstairs to the drawing-room, still holding Geof firmly by the hand.

'If you please, ma'am,' she said, as soon as they were inside the room, 'I am sorry to say Master Geoffrey has been a very naughty boy.'

'Oh, Gregory, I *am* sorry,' said Aunt Muriel, looking up from the sofa. 'Not in church, I hope?'

'No, ma'am, it was not in church, but coming home along up the Lees'—and then Gregory gave a detailed account of the whole affair, ending up with the suggestive remark—'and there are muffins for tea, ma'am.'

'Well,' said Aunt Muriel, 'I am very sorry to hear all this, Gregory. You can go upstairs now, and leave Master Geof with me. Come here, Geof,' as Gregory closed the door. Geof heaved a deep sigh, unbuttoned his pilot's coat, as if to give himself air, and walking across the room, seated himself by the sofa on rather a high chair, which left his short legs dangling. 'Geof, dear,' said Aunt Muriel, quite gently, 'why were you so naughty?'

'Boys *ought* to be naughty,' returned Geof, with an air of profound conviction.

'Oh, Geof! Now tell me, do you think Father's good?'

'Oh, yes!' said Geof promptly, 'Father's got two medals.'

'Yes; well, do you think Father would have got those medals if he had not been good?'

'But Father's a man!' said Geof, twisting on his chair.

'But was he always a man?'

'N-no.'

'Well, what was he before he was a man?'

'A boy.'

'And do you think if he hadn't been good when he was a boy that he would be good now?'

'What, wasn't he naughty ever?' asked Geof incredulously.

'Oh, yes, Geof, sometimes. But he tried to be good, and, you know, just as, if you hadn't tried to walk when you were a little child, you wouldn't be able to run about now, so if you don't try to be good now, you won't be good like Father, when you are a big man. You see that, don't you, Geof?'

'Ye-es.'

'And you want to be like Father, don't you?'

'Yes! I like medals.'

'Well, then you must try to be good now. And when you gave

Gregory such trouble, and were so rude to her, you weren't trying very hard, were you?'

'N-no,' said Geof; 'not very.'

'And that was such a pity! Well now, Geof, what am I to do? I don't like punishing people on Sundays.'

'Don't you?' said Geof, with an air of great interest.

'No, you know I don't. And so you ought to be very careful to be good on Sundays, because, when people are naughty——'

'They ought to be punished,' said Geof, with deep conviction. 'But,' he went on very gravely, and with a real desire to be of some assistance to his aunt, 'how would it be supposing I didn't have anything nice for tea to-morrow instead? Or to-morrow and Tuesday too? Oh, no, because I might be naughty again before then, and we shouldn't know what to do.'

'That would be a little awkward,' said his aunt. 'No, Geof, dear, I'll tell you the best plan. You shall go upstairs to Gregory, and beg her pardon, and tell her you won't be so tiresome again, and then we'll say no more about it, but both eat our muffins as usual. Don't you think that will be best?' Geof agreed, climbed clean off his chair, and began to move very slowly across the room. Presently he stopped and turned round.

'Aunt Muriel, I can't say I'll *never* do it again, can I? For you know I might, and then it would be a story, wouldn't it?'

'No, Geof, dear, you needn't say "never." Say you'll try not to do it again.'

Geof went on a few steps, and then stopped again.

'Well, Geof—what is it now?'

'Aunt Muriel, you weren't crying in church because I am so naughty, were you?'

'No, Geof, dear. I told you it was about something that happened long ago. Geof, it was about your Uncle Geoffrey—my brother after whom you are called.'

'The one that died?' inquired Geof, still lingering.

'Yes, Geof, he died here, at Folkestone, and that is why I have come back each year ever since. I cannot help caring for the place.'

'Was Uncle Geof good?'

'Yes, darling—very good.'

'And was Gregory his nurse when he was a little boy?'

'Yes, dear, just as she is your nurse now.'

'And did he beg her pardon ever?'

'I'm sure he did, Geof, when he had been naughty. But I can't remember exactly just now.'

'And does that church make you think of Uncle Geof, Auntie?'

'Yes, Geof, dear. Because I used to go there so often when he was ill.'

'What for?'

'To pray that dear Uncle Geof might get better, dear boy. But now run upstairs quickly, and get it over. Off with you!'

Geof stumped upstairs, meditating as he went—

'I suppose for Uncle Geof to get better was the thing that Auntie wanted,' he thought. 'I wonder if it wouldn't have been good if she had got it?'

Geof flung open the nursery door; Gregory was sitting at the round table in the middle of the room, her spectacles on her nose, and a book before her. Geof marched up to her chair and stood before her; certainly timidity and hesitation were no part of his faults.

'Gregory,' he said, without a moment's pause, 'I beg your pardon for tipping my hat into the puddle, and leading you such a dance, and calling you names. Auntie says I'm to try never to do it again.'

'Very well, Master Geof, I hope you won't. And I'm sure I'm always ready to forgive and forget. Take care, child!' as Geof flapped with his hat at a moth that was hovering near the lamp, thereby nearly upsetting it over Gregory and deluging her with oil.

'It's all right, I wasn't near it,' said Geof. 'Well, I've begged your pardon, and now I'm to have muffins for tea. Oh, and, Gregory'—suddenly recalling the worthy intentions he had had in church: he had not time now to carry them out himself, but would put Gregory in the way of recovering her lost property—'Gregory, you'll find your pink satin pincushion in the coal-hole.'

'In the *where*, you bad, abominable boy?' cried Gregory, rising to her feet, and making a clutch at the retreating Geof.

'The coal-hole—I don't think it's so very dirty there. There isn't anything but clean coal. You oughtn't to be angry, Gregory, I thought you'd want it back. I thought of it in church.'

Gregory groaned and shook her head. What was to be done with a boy who put pink satin pincushions into coal-holes, and thought in church about getting them out?

Geof, too, was perplexed at the way in which his attempt at reparation had been received. Surely it was quite obvious that he had meant nothing but good that time? Gregory said no more, but went on grumbling in a semi-inaudible voice, so he shut the door and went downstairs.

'It's *very* easy to be naughty,' he said to himself, as he went into the drawing-room.

CHAPTER III.

As a general rule when Geof's daily governess arrived at half-past nine in the morning, she found nothing prepared for her, and Geof either having a tremendous game of ball, or perfectly absorbed in boat-repairs in the nursery, which was used as a schoolroom, and vacated by Gregory in the morning.

'Half-past nine *already?*' he would say in his very grave, earnest tones, with his eyes wide open. 'Why, Miss Smith, I wasn't expecting you for *ever* so long. I *must* be quick.'

His gravity, and the tremendous bustle he made in getting out the books, disarmed any remonstrance, although the same thing occurred day after day, and Miss Smith had been wondering whether she ought not to appeal to his aunt, when, on the Monday morning after the events I have related, she was agreeably surprised to find quite a different state of things in the nursery to what she was accustomed to.

Geof was perfectly ready for her—nay, he seemed awaiting her arrival with impatience. His books were open, his copy already written, and he had drawn two chairs up to the table.

'Good-morning, Miss Smith,' he cried cheerfully, holding out his hand. 'I am going to be a good boy now, always. It is best. The Vicar said so, and last night Aunt Muriel told me a lot about Uncle Geof, and he was good too. And he liked his lessons, Aunt Muriel said. So I'm going to, at least, I think so; for I mean to be just like Uncle Geof. Did you know about Uncle Geof, Miss Smith? He died, you know; and the thing he died of was called consumption, and that's a very bad illness indeed, Aunt Muriel says. Should you think consumption was the illness that David said he would rather the people had? Well, there was Father, and Aunt Muriel, and Uncle Geof, and Father was in India all the time, and Aunt Muriel and Uncle Geof lived together. And then Uncle Geof died, here in Folkestone. Do you like hearing about Uncle Geof, Miss Smith? Should you like to hear some more? I can tell you a lot.'

'Not now, Geoffrey, I think,' said Miss Smith, who during Geof's harangue had taken off her things, and established herself at the table. 'You see, we have our lessons to do; but some other time I will hear all you have to say.'

Geof sighed deeply. Whatever Uncle Geof's tastes may have been, there was unfortunately no doubt that for his nephew's part, he preferred chattering to doing his lessons. However, this morning he really did pay attention and take great pains, getting triumphantly though laboriously through his chapter of 'Little Arthur,' his dictation, and his addition sum, the accomplishment of which brought him to the last ten minutes of lesson-time, which were reserved for the repetition of the first Latin declension, the only one of his studies which Geof really approved of, as being worthy of a boy. This over, Miss Smith took her departure, and Geof tore downstairs to Aunt Muriel, with the official message that he had been 'a very good boy.'

In the drawing-room, however, a blow awaited him. Aunt Muriel had a cold, and must stay indoors, which meant that Geof must go out with Gregory both morning and afternoon. His face fell, and he looked very cross.

'Now, Geof, nonsense,' said his aunt; 'you know Gregory is very kind to you when you're a good boy. Perhaps she will tell you a story. Gregory can tell capital stories, as I know by experience, and so do you. Now, do you see that brown paper parcel over there? Bring it to me; there's something in it for you.'

Geof needed no second bidding, and stood watching with great excitement while his aunt untied the string of the parcel, which proved to contain nothing more nor less than a bright scarlet French fisherman's cap, precisely the same as those worn by the little schoolboys who were such great objects of interest to Geof. He uttered a shout of satisfaction.

'Yes, I thought you would like it, because you are so fond of watching Mr. Henderson's little boys, and this is just what they wear. Now on windy days you can put it on instead of your straw hat, and then there will be no more tumbling into puddles. Yes, you may wear it to-day, if you like. Now off with you, Geof, and don't be a trouble to Gregory.'

Geof was in high spirits; the scarlet cap delighted him, and besides, the feeling of satisfaction at having done his lessons well had not gone off yet. So he followed Gregory down the steps, skipping and jumping, and cracking a long whip which he carried with him for the express purpose of pretending that he was a four-in-hand. Gregory, however, was rather grave. Perhaps she had not quite forgotten the pink satin pincushion, and that made her less responsive to Geof's chatter than usual, and more deaf to his hints as to the desirability of a story.

'No, Master Geoffrey, I've no story to tell you to-day. You must amuse yourself. Go and have a good run if you like, but keep out of the snow.'

It was early in November, and there had been a fairly heavy fall of snow in the night—no frost, however, so that it was melting as fast as it could, and the asphalt on the Lees was tolerably dry, though there was a good deal of disagreeable slush, half snow and half mud, upon the grass. At this Geof began to look with longing eyes; what fun it would be to make snowballs, but there was no chance of Gregory allowing that, so he had better put it out of his head at once.

He did put it out of his head for some time, but then a great trial of patience took place. Laughing and talking, jostling each other, sometimes running races, sometimes walking arm in arm, Mr. Henderson's little boys went by, and Geof's eyes grew wide with longing to be one of them. So happy, so free they looked, and presently, when one of them caught sight of a thickish patch of snow and pounced upon it with a cry of joy—when the whole troop began making snowballs and pelting each other as they tore about—Mr. Henderson never said one word about wet clothes or dirty feet, but only laughed, and actually—yes, he actually did pick up a snow-ball with his own hands and throw it at an audacious little boy who had thrown one suspiciously near himself.

'Oh, Gregory!' sighed Geof, his face scarlet and his eyes full of something very like tears.

'Well, Master Geof?' replied she composedly, and Geof looked at her in surprise.

Could it be that such a lesson was thrown away upon her, and that she did not draw the proper inference as to the way in which a person in charge of boys ought to behave? Her face was imperturbable.

'Oh, Gregory, *mayn't* I make snowballs too?' asked Geof, in great anxiety. How she could resist making them herself was more than he could understand, but at any rate she need not prevent him.

'Oh, Gregory, *do* let me.'

'No, Master Geof, I can't have you getting your feet wet. Only yesterday you was coughing your heart out, and I don't want to have you in bed to-morrow. Now don't you be asking me again, for I've told you once, and there's an end of it.'

Then Geof began to get naughty. He did all the things he knew Gregory did not like; he put on a don't-care face, he whistled, he splashed through puddles, he cracked his whip so close to her as almost to flick the lash into her face.

Gregory took no notice at first. Geof was sometimes subject to these fits of temper if he did not get his way, but often they passed off if he were let alone. Presently came a very violent crack of the whip, and the lash really did hit her in the face, not very hard, of course, but still hard enough to sting and be very disagreeable.

'Now, Geof, give me that whip,' she said, trying to take it.

He dodged her.

'Sha'n't!' he cried, in a provoking voice.

'Don't let me have to speak again—give me that whip,' she said, now really angry, but still anxious to prevent him from getting into serious trouble.

Geof stood looking at her for one moment, then a mischievous thought came into his head, and in a second he had bounded into the middle of the snow and mud.

'Come and fetch it!' he cried, waving it above his head. 'Come and fetch it, Gregory; here it is!'

She was after him in a moment; one end of the whip was in her hand, Geof tugged at the other, and it snapped in two.

'You've broken it! You've broken it! Oh, Gregory, you *beast!*' cried Geof, beside himself with rage.

Before Gregory had time to say a word he had taken up a handful of the dirty snow, and flung it full in her face. Then, horror-struck at the audacity of his own act, he stood still, and in a moment she had pinioned his hands.

'Now you come along home with me,' she said quietly, and this time Geof knew without telling what he had to expect.

'Where is Master Geoffrey?' asked his aunt, an hour later, as Gregory entered the drawing-room in answer to her bell.

'If you please, ma'am, I have given him a good whipping, and put him into bed.'

CHAPTER IV.

THAT afternoon Gregory had shopping to do in the town, and she took Geof with her as usual, an extremely subdued and crestfallen Geof, who walked beside her with excessive propriety, and seldom ventured upon a remark, though he replied politely to her pointedly cheerful attempts at conversation. Gregory might be strict, but her theory was—'When a thing's done, it had ought to be done *with*,' and she invariably aimed at 'making things pleasant for the child'—as soon as might be after the judicial infliction of punishment. Her shopping was always a lengthy business, and Geof hated it accordingly. She went into such very uninteresting shops, and bought such very dull things—nothing that he cared for the least. So he stood in the doorway of each consecutive shop, watched the passers-by, thought over his troubles, and counted the minutes till Gregory's 'Well, good-evening to you,' told him that one more trial of patience was at an end.

'Now, Master Geof, this is the last place I've got to go to,' said Gregory encouragingly, as they turned into a large milliner's shop down in Harbour Street.

'Dear, dear, the gas is lit already, and how ever am I to match my silks?'

A difficult proceeding it was indeed, and a long time it took. At last, however, it was accomplished, Gregory said her 'good-evening,' took up her parcels, and looked round for Geof.

'Come along, my dear—' she was beginning, but suddenly stopped short. Why, where was Geof?

'Have you seen my young gentleman?' she said to the shopman who had served her. No, he had seen Geof come in with her, of course, but had not noticed him since. Perhaps he had gone into the other part of the shop. He would go and see. He went, and returned with the news that Geof had not been seen.

'Thank you,' said Gregory. 'I won't trouble you any further. No doubt he's outside looking into some of the other shop windows. Good-evening, and thank you again.'

She pushed through the swing doors, and looked eagerly up and down the street. No Geof was in sight—where could he have got to? Presently a thought came into her head. 'The little mischievous monkey,' she said to herself. 'He thought he'd play me a trick and run off home. Well, I thought he'd done enough for one day, but there's no getting to the end of *him*.'

The more she thought of it, the more certain she felt that her surmise was right, and consequently she was much surprised and concerned when, on reaching home and going up to the nursery, she found that Geof was not there.

'Peter,' she called over the stairs, to the page boy who had let her in. 'Peter, has Master Geof come home?'

'Master Geof?' answered the boy. 'I've not seen him since he went out with you.'

Aunt Muriel, sitting quietly in the drawing-room, was startled by Gregory's hasty knock and entrance.

'If you please, ma'am, I can't think what's come of Master Geof.'

A very few words explained the state of the case, and Aunt Muriel was even more anxious than Gregory herself. Such care was always taken of Geof, he was never allowed to be out by himself. What could have become of him? Where could he be? Harbour Street was, as its name indicates, very near the harbour. Geof was very fond of going to look at the shipping, he had been tired of waiting in the shop. Could he have gone off to the quay by himself? If so, it was getting dusk, he was a very little fellow—the ideas that suggested themselves were very alarming to his aunt.

'I must go out and look for him myself,' she said. 'You come with me, Gregory, we must lose no time.'

Gregory tried to dissuade her, she was very delicate, her cold already bad, it was damp and foggy, and there was a bitter wind. It was all of no use, go she must and would. Gregory was severe with Geof, and if, as of course was possible, he had hidden himself for fun, he would perhaps be afraid to show himself if he saw her.

High and low they hunted, but to no purpose, Geof was not on the quay, no one there had seen him. An old sailor to whom they spoke laughed at the idea of his falling into the water. 'A boy don't fall into the water as quiet as a kitten with her head in a bag,' he said. 'A boy 'd scritch out loud enough if he felt hisself agoin'. Now if the little chap'd scritched, I should 'a heard him. For I've been here an hour or more, walkin' about on this quay. And I never heard no scritch. No, no, you go home. You may depen' he's there afore you, a-laughin' at you in his sleeve. That's a boy, bless you, that's a boy!' Next they tried the other shops to which Gregory had been, then the Lees, but all with no success.

Aunt Muriel's cough was getting worse and worse, her voice was almost gone, the wind blew colder and colder, presently it began to snow. At last Gregory begged her mistress to go indoors. ''Twill do no good, ma'am,' she said, 'for you to get ill, and ill you will be, if you stay out as you are. Better go indoors and get to bed, and then I'll send to the police.'

There was obviously nothing else to do, nor was it too soon, for no sooner had they got into the house, than Miss Hope was seized with one of the severe shivering and fainting fits, to which she was occasionally subject, and which had more than once been the precursors of serious illness.

Poor Gregory was beside herself, but she was an excellent nurse, and knew exactly what to do. Peter was sent off for the doctor, who was an old friend, and who might, Gregory thought, besides prescribing for Miss Hope, give them the best advice as to what to do about Geof. There was at all events no other course possible, and Gregory hoped it would be for the best.

She got her mistress to bed, and then sat down by her side, trying to suggest plausible reasons for Geof's disappearance, and waiting anxiously for the ring at the front door which would announce the doctor's arrival.

CHAPTER V.

At a quarter before five, nearly dusk on a November day, Mr. Henderson's little boys were hurrying home to tea. A fog was rising from the sea, the wind blew from the east, and it was high time for everybody who could manage it to be indoors. So thought Mr. Henderson, but his boys had been kept late at one of Hullah's classes, which was held in the town, and attended by several of the schools in the neighbourhood; he walked them on as fast as he could, a boy on each side of him, and the others following, a cheerful chattering troop. One little boy there was, however, who kept rather apart from the rest and did not talk, or apparently wish to talk to any one. He looked independent enough, as he stepped along with his hands in his pockets, but perhaps he felt the cold, for he kept his chin well tucked down behind the collar of his pilot's coat, and his scarlet cap was pulled down over his eyes.

The boys' entrance to the Red House was open, and the boys filed in, making a great clatter in the stone paved passage which led to the room where they took off their coats and boots. It was rather dark in the boot-room, but they knew the whereabouts of pegs and lockers well enough, and each boy made as much haste as he could to get out of the cold and gloom to the warm tea-room upstairs, to which all were summoned by the ringing of a bell. 'Hullo,' said a small sandy-haired boy, to another who was fumbling rather with his coat, and obstructed his passage for a moment. 'Look out, Fitz, you nearly tripped me up. Hullo, why it's not Fitz! I say, who are you?'

'Oh,' replied the new-comer calmly, 'I'm a new boy—a new fellow,' he added rather hastily.

'What's your name then?' asked the other, who was too much interested in his own affairs to care particularly about other people's, and, like many children of his age, inclined to take everything for granted, being averse to the trouble of investigation. 'What's your name?'

'Hope,' was the prompt reply.

'I say, have you got any jam?'

Jam and new boy were two very closely-connected ideas in his mind, and there was a considerable degree of interest in the tone of this question.

'N—no,' said Master Hope, with an evident sense of his own shortcoming. 'N—no. Not *this* time, that is.'

'Perhaps you're going to have your box of sock sent after you,' suggested his sandy-haired friend. 'On your birthday. Lots of fellows do that—when *is* your birthday? But come on up to tea.'

'I was only waiting for you,' said Geof, and the two tramped upstairs together into a large cheerful red-curtained room, with a long table in the middle, laid for tea. The boys were just taking their places round it, and Geof and his companion had only time to slip into two chairs side by side and escape being obviously late.

At one end of the table sat Mr. Henderson, a tall grave-looking man, but with a quick merry smile, and eyes that could twinkle a good deal on occasion. Opposite him sat his mother, the kindest and wisest of old ladies, who was quite as important a personage in the school as himself. The boys were all devoted to her, they called her 'missus,' and she taught the youngest form, besides giving individual attention to any one who was backward and required it. Her influence, and the limited number of boys, made the whole establishment far more like a large family than a school, though no doubt some of its younger members would deeply have resented the insinuation.

'Who is that dark-haired little fellow with the big brown eyes?' asked Mrs. Henderson of the boy next her. 'Do you know him, Jock?'

'No, I don't,' answered Jock. 'He came in with Bill, *he* seems to know him all right.'

Mrs. Henderson supposed her son had given Bill leave to bring in a friend to tea, and thought no more of the matter; Mr. Henderson, who had likewise observed Geof, came to a similar conclusion; no doubt the missus had told Bill, whose family resided near Folkestone, and who was a boy of many friends, that he might ask one of them to tea.

'What's *your* name?' Geof asked, beginning with great appetite upon a substantial piece of bread-and-butter, off a plate which was handed round by a maid.

'Brown,' answered the other boy, as soon as he could for bread-and-butter. 'But there's another fellow called Brown, so they call me Bill, mostly, that's my Christian name. I say, what's your father?'

'A soldier,' answered Geof, with some pride, but Bill did not appear to be much impressed.

'Oh,' he said. 'Well, mine's a member of Parliament, and I'm going to be one too, when I'm a man. I say, are you a Liberal or a Conservative?'

'A—a Conservative, I *think*,' hesitated Geof, who had not the remotest idea of what it meant, but would not for the world expose his ignorance.

'Are you? Well, I'm a Liberal, and so's my father. He hasn't been in very long though'—[in where? Geof wondered]. 'I've got his election address upstairs, stuck over my bed with a pin, and Lamb—that's him over there—the fellow with the rum nose—he tried to pull it down. I shied my brush at him though, and you ought to have heard him sing out!'

'Oh!' said Geof, very deeply impressed, and feeling that this was indeed a boy to be respected.

'Yes,' went on Bill, 'I shall go to Eton when I'm thirteen—that's in four years. Then when I'm nineteen I shall go to Oxford, and get into Parliament directly I've taken my degree. I advise you to do the same. It's much the best.'

'But,' said Geof, 'I'm going to be a soldier.'

'Well, I wouldn't. It's much better sport to be in Parliament. You see, one might get to be Prime Minister, and have a rare time of it.'

'I don't think I should care for that,' said Geof, wondering what a Prime Minister might be. 'I'd rather be a soldier and wear a uniform and fight. Then you get medals too. My father has.'

'Oh—*medals!*' said Bill, with ineffable scorn.

'Well, I don't believe members have them, anyhow,' said Geof, getting rather angry.

'Oh, don't they, that's all! My father's got a whole lot on his watch-chain, and he's got to show them to the guard, when he's travelling, and it does instead of a ticket. He wears a uniform too, sometimes, when he goes to Court, that's to see the Queen, you know: its dark blue—with a gold stripe down the side of the trousers—as broad as *this*. I say,'—changing the subject,—'can you bowl lobs?'

'N—no, not very well,' replied Geof, again concealing his ignorance and feeling his inferiority.

'Well, they're an awfully useful kind of ball. Just sometimes, you know; of course, if once you get your eye in, you're all right, but if you don't look out, the first ball or two, especially if you ain't used to them, they're safe to get your wicket. Well, in our last match but one, there was a fellow on the other side making an awful lot of runs. He hit Graham about like fun—that's our best bowler—so, just for a change, Parker put me on. Parker was Captain then, but he's left this term. Well, I'm in for my batting, you know, but I can bowl lobs. Well, my first ball the fellow tried to hit out. Fancy, *hitting* a a lob, you know.'

'Fancy!' echoed Geof, with increased awe and respect. All this was Greek to him, but none the less interesting for that. 'And what happened? Did he get out?'

'*Did he get out!*' repeated Bill in a tone of scorn. 'Why, what can you expect, if you hit at a lob?—it wasn't a full pitch, mind you. Of course he got out; the ball just trundled along—*so*'—and Bill jerked a crumb from between with his finger and thumb—'and took his middle stump. It saved us the match, I can tell you that. I say, Hope, can you drink your tea like *this*, without taking the cup up in your hands?'

'Rather!' said Geof, delighted to have found something which he could, or, at least, thought he could do. He ducked his head, and applied his lips to the full cup, which of course immediately upset, and deluged Geof and his neighbour with tea.

'Well, you *are* clumsy,' said Bill unsympathisingly. 'Lucky missus wasn't looking! Here, help mop it up, can't you? Hullo, we're going now. There's an hour to loaf about in, before we begin preparation. Look here, if you like I'll show you my book that I've got stuck full of matches, the Australians, and lots more. Is your name down for Lords? *mine* is. I expect I shall be a member by about the time I'm in Parliament, and I shan't be so very much up in London before then.'

The evening hour of recreation was usually spent by Mr. Henderson and his mother in the latter's sitting-room. The boys were none the worse, they thought, for being left to themselves for a time, though one or other of them made a point of looking into the schoolroom once during the said hour, at the conclusion of which Mr. Henderson appeared to superintend the half hour of preparations which, little fellows that they were, was all that was exacted from them before prayers, supper, and bed.

The mother and son sat talking together upon different subjects, and for some time Master Geof might have been miles away for all the space he occupied in their thoughts. Fortune, however, whether good or bad, did not favour him for so long as, silly little boy that he was, he fondly hoped.

'A nice-looking little fellow, that friend of Bill's,' said Mrs. Henderson. 'The monkey, did you see him upset his tea? I did not like to call a visitor to account! Do you remember what Bill said his name was?'

'Do *I* remember? No. I know nothing about him, except that I have often seen him on the Lees. I thought of course that you had given Bill leave to ask him in.'

'But that's just what I thought about you,' said his mother. 'Are you sure Bill didn't speak about it some days ago? You might have forgotten, you know.'

'I am positive he did no such thing.'

'How very funny!' laughed Mrs. Henderson. 'Where can the little fellow have dropped from?'

'I suspect Master Bill has been giving an invitation on his own account,' said Mr. Henderson. 'I think I must go and see about it.'

In the schoolroom was a cheerful hubbub of voices; the boys were apparently amusing themselves very well—some reading, some playing games, some talking, one musical genius picking out a tune upon a banjo, eyed with admiration and envy by a small group of his fellows. Bill and Geof were seated together by the fire, with a large scrap-book between them. Geof had had to undergo a certain amount of cross-questioning when he first came into the room, but as it chiefly related to his age, parentage, and prospects of jam, and was moreover shortened by Bill's eagerness to get to his scrap-book, he managed to get through it pretty well. Bill was holding forth eagerly, when Mr. Henderson appeared at the door.

'You see,' he was saying, 'there was only a quarter of an hour before the stumps were drawn, so there was nothing for it but to hit. You *must* hit when you're playing against time. Well, the Harrow fellows——'

'Bill,' said Mr. Henderson's voice.

'Here, wait a second,' said Bill, 'I'll tell you the rest directly; and, as he got up from his seat, he bundled the scrap-book over to Geof, who somehow felt that Mr. Henderson's appearance had to do with himself.

'Bill,' said Mr. Henderson, as the boy came to him, 'who gave you leave to ask a friend in to-night?'

'Me, sir? I haven't asked anybody in.'

'Who is that boy, then, sitting by the fire?'

'That, sir? Why, that's Hope, of course, the new fellow!'

'Ah!' said Mr. Henderson, beginning to suspect something peculiar in Geof's sudden appearance. 'Well, send him over here to me, I want to speak to him.'

'Hope,' said Bill, returning to Geof, who had caught the sound of his own name, and was beginning to feel decidedly uncomfortable. 'Hope, you're to go and speak to Mr. Henderson; about your work, I expect. Never mind, we'll finish when you come back.'

Geof rose from his chair, and slowly walked up to Mr. Henderson, who observed his discomfiture, and felt more than ever sure that there was something wrong.

'My boy,' he said, 'I want to speak to you. But I think we will come into another room.'

Geof followed him swiftly across the hall into the sitting-room, where Mrs. Henderson looked up from her knitting, and nodded kindly at him.

'Good-evening,' she said. 'Are you going home now?' 'Did you solve the mystery?'—this to her son.

'That is what I am going to try and do now,' replied her son, sitting down and motioning Geof to a seat.

'Now, my boy, what made you come here to-night? Did one of the boys ask you? Don't be afraid, speak up,' as Geof grew scarlet, and hung his head. 'We are very glad to have you, you know; only we want to know how you came. Who told you to come?'

'Nobody,' muttered Geof.

'Nobody? Well, then, what made you come?'

'I've come to be at school here,' said Geof, recovering his courage a little, and trying to speak with assurance. 'I want to be a schoolboy; I know *mensa*, a table, or, O table, *mensae*, of a table——'

'I am glad of it,' said Mr. Henderson, smiling rather. 'That is a valuable piece of information, but I am afraid you cannot enter the school in this extremely sudden way upon the strength of it. Come, my boy, you must tell me something more. Where do your friends live? Do they know you are here—and how do you expect to get home?'

Geof hesitated. What was he to do?

'You really must tell us, dear boy,' said Mrs. Henderson kindly. 'You know they may be quite anxious about you at home, if you have come away without telling anybody.'

'Gregory would be glad if I were lost!' burst out Geof.

Mrs. Henderson was going to inquire who Gregory might be, but her son signed to her not to speak.

'And so you ran away from Gregory?' he hazarded.

'Well,' said Geof, feeling that everything must come out now, but with a faint hope that when his new friends heard the hardships to which he was exposed, they would take his part and deliver him from the ignominious sway of Gregory. 'Well, I suppose I did rather run away; but I think a boy ought to be at school. Gregory's my nur—I mean, she's my aunt's housekeeper. And you don't know how cross she is—she really is. This morning she—she whipped me; and it was quite a little snow I had thrown at her too. And she kept me in bed for an hour and a half, I know it was, because I heard the cuckoo clock. Then, this afternoon, I had to go out with her, and she went to the shops. I hate it, of course boys always do hate a woman's shopping. And then, when it was late, and she was in one of them, the boys went by, and I thought, I had a red cap too, so I would go with them and be at school. I thought there are so many of them that you wouldn't notice if there was another. But you did! And I saw in church that there was one away, so I knew there'd be room. I thought perhaps there wouldn't be a place at tea, but there was—I don't know how that was,' said Geof meditatively.

Mr. Henderson, who had listened to this narration with varying degrees of gravity, now got up and left the room.

'Your coat, Jem, with this wind!' his mother cried, and Geof looked after him with anxiety.

'Where's he gone to?' he asked.

'To get his hat, and take you home,' said Mrs. Henderson gravely.

'My dear little boy, I don't know whom you may have at home besides Gregory, but have you not thought how very anxious you may be making them?'

'There's Aunt Muriel,' said Geof, feeling for the first time a pang of self-reproach.

'Here is Mr. Henderson,' said his mother, as he re-entered the room. 'Now you must go at once. Have you a coat? In the boot-room; we must send for it directly. There, and your cap too. Just like our boys—unluckily, I am afraid we must say. Good-bye, my dear child, what did you say your name was? Geoffrey Hope? Well, good-bye, Geoffrey Hope, perhaps we may be better acquainted some day. And where do you live? twenty-three King's Terrace? It will take you half-an-hour to get there and back, Jem. I will see to the boys' preparation to-night. Good-night, Geoffrey, good-night!'

Mr. Henderson strode along fast, and Geof trotted by his side. He did not talk very much; he was beginning to perceive that he had been a very naughty boy, and to be nervous as to the reception with which he would meet.

Would Aunt Muriel be very angry? Would she write and tell his father? Geof was afraid she would, and that was one of the things he minded most.

Had she been really frightened? he wondered. Probably she thought he had run away to sea, that was what the boys in story-books mostly did; he did not think he had ever heard of a boy running away *to* school before—*away* from school they sometimes ran, he knew. Well, anyhow, it was all Gregory's fault—she had driven him to it.

'I think any boy 'd run away from a person that treated him like Gregory does me,' he said confidentially, after a bit.

'Brave people don't run away from anything,' said Mr. Henderson.

'Don't they ever?'

'No, they bear things. Don't you know what people are called who are not brave?'

'C-c-cowards,' said Geoffrey, stammering and blushing scarlet, dark though it was.

'Yes, cowards. Well, I should remember that next time I thought of running away——'

'What—to school?' said Geoffrey, very low.

'Yes. To any place that you like better than the one where you are. Now, is this your house?'

Geoffrey was hanging his head. He felt very small indeed. Was he really a coward? A pretty thing that would be to write and tell Father about!

'I—I think I sha'n't do it again,' he said in a very subdued tone, as they crossed the road.

'That's right. We'll shake hands upon that. Now I'll just see you safe inside.'

He rang the bell, and Geof's heart beat furiously as they stood upon the doorstep.

Half-unconsciously he gradually retreated till he was almost out of sight, hidden by Mr. Henderson.

'What, oh, what,' he thought, 'would Aunt Muriel say?'

The door was opened quickly, and an anxious face looked out.

'Oh, doctor,' said Gregory's voice; but she stopped short at the sight of Geof. 'You wicked, wicked boy!' she cried. 'If you haven't killed your poor aunt, it's not your fault.'

CHAPTER VI.

Geof was very unhappy; Aunt Muriel was ill, very ill, and it was all his fault. Three days had gone by since the day he had run away, and every day she had got worse. That first night, he had only just been taken into her room for a minute that she might see he was safe, and then Gregory had hurried him off to be out of the way when the doctor came. Gregory had not even had time to scold him, and Anne, the housemaid, had put him to bed. All night Gregory had been up with Aunt Muriel, and very early the next morning, she had sent for the doctor again. And the doctor had given a very bad account indeed.

'She was very ill in both her lungs,' that was what Geof gathered from what the housemaid would tell him. Gregory he hardly saw, and she had not even heard the whole history of his adventures. Nor had anybody else. Geof was not going to confide in either Anne or Peter, and he answered their questions very shortly and crossly indeed. Poor little fellow, he was very unhappy. There seemed to be an overwhelming cloud of unforgiven naughtiness, and of mysterious threatening trouble about him; and very much did he long for somebody to whom he could tell everything, somebody who would scold him and forgive him, and explain away this dread of some terrible unknown grief. Miss Smith came each day as usual to give him his lessons, but she had other pupils, and could not stay beyond her hour and a half, nor had her acquaintance with Geof been long enough to enable her to help him very much at the present juncture. When she had gone, either Anne or Peter took him for a walk, which was repeated in the afternoon. A very dismal affair, for Geof's hand was held tight all the time, and when he begged to be let go, the answer was, 'It's Mrs. Gregory's orders, Master Geof.'

Was there ever such a miserable state of things? Would Aunt Muriel ever get well again? If she never did, would Geof be put in prison, because Gregory said it was all his fault? On this third day of his aunt's illness, as he was wearily climbing upstairs after his afternoon walk, Geof heard voices in the drawing-room, and stopped a minute on the landing to discover who might be there. The door was ajar, and he heard Gregory's voice saying something about 'Mr. Geoffrey' and 'in the family,' and then he was sure—yes, he really was sure he heard a sound as if some one were crying. Could it possibly be Gregory? *Gregory* to cry? What a very, very extraordinary thing. He really must push open the door, and see if it were true. He did push the door, but it creaked, thereby making the two people who were in the room look round to see who was there. Gregory was standing up by the table, and she had, yes, she evidently had been applying her apron to her eyes. The other person was the Vicar, and he got up directly he saw Geof, and came across the room to meet him. The Vicar knew Aunt Muriel quite well, and this was not the first time he had been to ask after her.

'Ah, my boy,' he said cheerfully, as Geof shook hands with him, 'I am glad you have come in. Do you know, we were just speaking of you?'

Geof gazed first at the Vicar and then at Gregory with open eyes; then he bent them to the ground, and turned very red.

No doubt Gregory had been telling what a naughty boy he had been; could naughtiness have been the thing she said was 'in the family,' he wondered? Oh, no, because she had been saying something about 'Mr. Geoffrey,' and that meant Uncle Geof, and he was good.

'Yes,' the Vicar went on, 'and we have been making a capital plan for you, which you'll be delighted at, I'm sure you will! Why, what a big fellow he is, nurse! Only seven? to look at him, he might be nearly nine, he looks like a schoolboy already. Now, Geof, my man, hold up your head, and listen to what I've got to say. You know your dear aunt is ill—yes, of course, you know it—please God she'll be better soon, but just now she is very ill, and there is no doubt about it. Now you know the house must be very quiet, I don't mean that you've been troublesome, I'm quite sure you haven't, but it is hard for a boy like you to make no noise at all, and it wouldn't be good for you if you could manage it; and you see Mrs. Gregory is too busy to have much time to give to you. I tell you all this, Geof, because you're a sensible boy, and I want you to see the reason of what I'm going to propose. You will be better away from here; I would take you home myself if I could, but you know I live in the clergy-house, and we are not overburdened with room. Besides, I'm afraid you would find us rather dull companions. So this is what I have thought of—you must often have noticed a school of little boys out walking on the Lees, little fellows, Geof, about your size, and all wearing red caps, something like the one you've got in your hand. Well, the master of that school is a great friend of mine, and I've been thinking what a capital thing it would be if we could get him to take you in—just for a bit, you know, till your aunt gets better, and let you do lessons and play with his little boys. Now what do you say? Wouldn't that be—— Why, Geof, Geof! my man, what's all this? Gently, gently, my poor little man—why, what's the matter?' For Geof had thrown himself upon the floor, face downwards, fists clenched, in a very paroxysm of tears and sobs.

'Well, to be sure, there ain't no accounting for children,' began Gregory, but Geof made an angry lunge at her with his feet, and the Vicar made a sign to her that she had better go.

'Leave him alone with me for a little while,' he said in a low voice, which Geof was prevented from hearing by his own passionate sobs and gulps. 'I expect he has been feeling his aunt's illness more than we know, and it will do him good to have it all out. If he is very much against it, we had better not send him away, but I fully expect he will come round in a few minutes.'

Gregory left the room, and the Vicar sat patiently by Geof for a second or two, waiting for the vehemence of his sobs to subside.

'Now, Geof,' he said presently. 'Be a man! Stop crying, and tell me what it is all about?'

'I—I—I *don't want* to go,' sobbed Geof, still shaking and heaving as he lay on the ground. The Vicar picked him up and set him upon his knee.

'My boy, no one will make you go against your will. You sha'n't go unless you come to see yourself that it is best. So be happy about that, and let us talk it over. Why is it that you so much dislike the idea of going?'

'Because—because—' said Geof, in a very low voice, but gradually recovering himself a little—'because I wanted so much to go before, and then—I went.'

'You went, my dear boy?' asked the Vicar, not quite understanding what Geof meant. 'You went? And where did you go?'

'To school,' faltered Geof. 'To Mr. Henderson's, and that was what did it. It—it was just like you said in church, about wanting things, and school was the thing I wanted. But now—but now—oh, I *don't*,'—and he began to sob again.

'My boy,' said the Vicar, still not perfectly understanding, 'Gregory told me something about your staying out late on Monday evening, and giving them all a fright. Is this what you mean?'

'Yes,' said Geof, and then with many a pause, many a relapse into sobbing, and much help from the Vicar, he told the whole story from beginning to end.

When he had finished the Vicar was silent for a few seconds 'You see—you see,' said Geof, looking up at him timidly, 'it's like the man who got rich—and then he wished he wasn't. And I can't—I can't go there now, can I?'

'Geof,' said the Vicar, very kindly but gravely, 'I quite understand what you feel. And I do think it would be quite a hard thing for you now, as matters stand, to go back to Mr. Henderson's. If you think it would be too hard, I will not urge you to go, and either you shall stay at home, or we must arrange something else. But I want you just to think of one thing. You are a very little boy, Geof, but I think you can understand. You went to school once, to please yourself. You know well enough that it was naughty. Now here is a chance of going, *not* to please yourself, but because it seems wisest—because it seems to be the best way in which you can *help*, in this illness of your aunt's which you feel you have done something towards bringing on. Take a few minutes to think it over, Geof, and then you shall settle, quite for yourself—whether or no, I shall go to Mr. Henderson's when I leave here, and ask him if he can take you in.'

Geof was silent; he got very red, and he played with the Vicar's watch-chain, then—

'I—I think I'll go,' he said.

CHAPTER VII.

'HULLO, Hope, I'm glad you've come back. I say, do you want to hear about that match I was telling you of the other night? I will fetch the book, if you like. I don't know what you went off for like that. I asked Mr. Henderson if you weren't coming back, and he said, "not at present," and here you are. Well, here's the place. You see, Harrow— I say, what is the use of my telling you things if you ain't attending?'

There was certainly some force in this, Geof felt, but he could not help wishing that Bill would desist from 'telling him things,' to which he felt so very, very much disinclined to listen. He had only arrived at the school about half an hour ago. The Vicar had gone at once to arrange with Mr. Henderson that he should be taken in that very night, thinking that it would be much easier for him to get it over at once.

So his things had been packed up, and he had gone off after tea, in a fly, by himself, and feeling a very forlorn little boy indeed. Mr. and Mrs. Henderson had both been very kind, and told him that the boys did not know any particulars about his sudden arrival and disappearence the other night, and that he certainly need not tell them, if he did not wish to do so.

Then he had been sent to the schoolroom, where Bill greeted him as already related. 'Of course you needn't look at my book if you don't *want* to,' said that young gentleman rather huffily. 'I'm sure I don't want to show it you, but I thought you cared about cricket.'

'So I do,' said Geof apologetically. 'But—but my aunt is so very ill,' he nearly sobbed, but managed to turn it into a cough.

'Your aunt is? What, your father's sister? or, your mother's?' inquired Bill, as if this particular were of the greatest possible importance.

'My father's,' said Geof.

'What's the matter with her?'

'It's her lungs, the doctor said.'

'Ah, that's bad,' said Bill, with the air of a physician. 'I had a cousin died of that.'

Then—for a wonder—perceiving Geof's look of grief and alarm, he went on hastily—

'But that's nothing. I had an uncle who was very ill, and *he* got all right.'

'And was that lungs, too?' inquired Geof anxiously.

'N—no. I don't think it was. But there was straw all down the street—and you never saw anything like the mud, after a bit, when it got wet. You know, I've been ill myself too, and *I'm* all right. It was chicken-pox. Have you ever had that? Well, you have spots, you know, only not so close together as measles. My youngest brother had them too, and when we were better, we used to play cricket with a brush and a pair of socks rolled up. It was all practice, you know. Well, if you really want to hear about that match, I don't mind telling you.'

Bill was the best possible consoler for Geof, it was impossible to be melancholy for very long in his company. Presently, too, some of the other boys came up and talked to Geof; they were a nice, good-natured set of little fellows, and it was not long before he felt tolerably at home with them. He was relieved to find that he was to sleep in the same room as Bill; but though this was a comfort, it did not prevent him from crying himself to sleep under the bedclothes, that, and each ensuing night. His worst fears for Aunt Muriel always returned in some unaccountable way directly he got into bed. Nor were the reports, daily sent to Mrs. Henderson, as encouraging as might have been wished. 'No better,' 'Rather worse,' 'A little better,' 'Very weak,' 'Not quite so well,' such was their tenor, day by day; and Geof was not the only one made anxious by them. It was at night, as already said, that he was most at the mercy of his fears. The day was so filled up with the routine of school life, that he had not so very much time to think at all.

Prayers were at eight, then breakfast, then three hours' work, with twenty minutes' play in the middle. Afterwards a walk which lasted till dinner. In the afternoon, football, or a walk till four; then two hours' work before tea, excepting on the day for Hullah's class. Geof found the lessons much harder than those to which he had been used, and he experienced great inconvenience and mortification from not being able to read quite easily. It was rather dreadful to be quite the most backward boy in the school. Bill was his great patron, partly perhaps because Geof was such an untiring listener to his ceaseless flow of conversation, which was apt to become rather too much for some people, but also because Bill was a kindly, well-disposed little boy, and really sorry for Geof's trouble, about which he knew more than any one else in the school. It was to Bill, too, that Geof owed indirectly, and always felt as if he owed entirely, the escape from these long, dreary days—long, dreary, anxious and miserable—spent at school though they were.

It was the day for Hullah's class, and the boys had been into the town for it as usual. They were taken there and back by the French master, who did not live in the school, but came in twice a week to give his lessons, and sometimes made himself useful by taking the boys out walking. Geof was very miserable. There had been no message at all from King's Terrace that day—what could it mean? Something very dreadful, he felt sure.

'Bill,' he said to his friend, as the boys were slowly climbing the steep hill that leads up to the Sandgate Road from the lower part of the town, 'Bill, I—I believe my aunt is dead.'

'Do you really?' said Bill, in an awestruck voice, impressed by the despair in Geof's tones.

'Yes—I do. Or else they would have sent, like they do every day. I believe she's dead—now I shall never—never be able——' here little Geof's voice faltered, and he had to bite his lips very hard not to cry.

'What won't you ever be able to do,' asked Bill sympathisingly.

'There was something I wanted very badly to say to her before she died,' said Geof, in a low voice. 'And now I never, never can!'

'Well, I'll tell you what,' said Bill. 'You don't know for certain, and you'd much better go and see. Let's ask Degville if you may.'

'I don't believe he'll let me,' said Geof sadly.

'Then I vote you go without asking. Look here, when we pass the Church, you slip in there and wait a few minutes. Then when we've all gone on, you come out and run to your house as fast as ever you can. I'll tell Mr. Henderson where you are when we get back; *he* won't mind, or at any rate the missus won't. And I'll say you'll be back to tea, if—if——' Bill did not like to say, 'if your aunt is alive.' So he went on, 'You see, you can *very nearly* get back to tea, if you pelt along as hard as ever you can, after you've been home.'

As the boys passed along the flagged pathway leading through the churchyard, Geof lagged behind. He stood for one moment in the porch, then pushed open the door, and was inside the church. How very dim and quiet it was, how very, very quiet! Geof had never been in an empty church before in all his life.

Pale light streamed in through the west window, and he could see a sort of glimmer too, from the cross that stood upon the altar. The noise of footsteps outside, of carts in the street behind, of the waves far below the cliff, sounded strange and far away. It was like being in another world. This was the church that always made Aunt Muriel think of Uncle Geof; there was the pew where she had sat two Sundays ago, she had cried then. It was Geof who had most reason to cry now. Aunt Muriel used to come to this church when Uncle Geof was ill—to pray for him, she had said. Why should not Geof pray for *her*, now? He would, he was very glad he had thought of it. He knelt down in the nearest pew, and said his morning prayers straight through, and then his evening ones. He also added a prayer quite out of his own head, that even if Aunt Muriel did die, she might first forgive him for having been such a very naughty boy. Then he got up, pushed open the church door, pulled his cap over his ears, and set off in the direction of King's Terrace as hard as ever he could go. The door of number twenty-three was not locked, so he opened it and crept softly up the stairs.

All was very quiet, though he could hear voices below in the servants' part of the house. He peeped into the drawing-room, and a sudden horror thrilled him.

The blinds were drawn—he had not thought of it before, but were not the blinds always drawn down when people died?

He almost felt as if he knew enough, and it was no use going any further.

Still, yes, he would go up to Aunt Muriel's room. Feeling, somehow, as though he must make even less noise than before, he took off his boots, and laying them gently down, crept very, very softly up to the landing above. The dressing-room door was ajar, and almost holding his breath, he pushed it open and went in on tiptoe. Not a sound—no, but Aunt Muriel's own door was open, too, and through this streamed some light. What could that mean, he wondered. He must go and see, his heart was beating violently, but he must go on.

Very slowly he moved across the room, he reached the door, he pushed it gently open—then rushed forward with a cry—a cry of joy.

For there was Aunt Muriel—in bed, it is true, and very pale and ill, but smiling at him—beckoning to him—holding out her arms, and looking almost as if she had expected him to come.

'Oh, Auntie,' gasped Geof—his head almost buried in the bed clothes. 'Oh, Auntie—Auntie, then you aren't dead at all?'

'Dead, dear boy? No, better—should I have sent for you if not? But why are you so late? Had you started for your walk when the message came?'

'I didn't know—I didn't know,' cried Geof. 'And, Auntie, will you forgive me for being such a naughty boy—and running away? I never, never will again! And, Auntie, I've settled—yes, I've quite settled never to go to school, when you let me come back—nor to Sandhurst—nor be a soldier. But I'll always—always take care of you—and stay with you. And—and Gregory,' added Geof, with a heroic effort.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mr. Henderson's little boys are still to be seen at Folkestone, marching down the Lees, in their scarlet caps, climbing the hill after their singing lesson, or playing cricket and football in their field.

They are a cheerful contented-looking set, but perhaps the most cheerful and contented of them all is a certain square little boy with a closely cropped dark head, red cheeks, and big brown eyes.

Geof is now a regular pupil at the Red House, but every Saturday afternoon he appears at number twenty-three King's Terrace, and spends his Sunday there. When Aunt Muriel is away, he goes to the clergy-house, where the Vicar has somehow or other contrived to find him a corner, nor does he consider the company there at all dull. As to Gregory, now that the management of Master Geoffrey is in other hands, she has adopted a new method of displaying the affection for him which, scoldings notwithstanding, she always felt.

With her own hands, at the end of every holidays, she makes him a cake, and packs it up, with jam pots of various sizes, to be taken back to school.

And this is only one of the many kind things she is always doing to please him. When Aunt Muriel is away, and Geof writes to her, he never forgets to send a message to Gregory. From the above it will be seen that his noble offer to give up school, and Sandhurst, and soldiering and everything, was not accepted.

What would his father say to that? Aunt Muriel had asked, and after a bit, Geof came to see that it might be rather a disappointment to him after all, and of course that would never have done. He is coming home very soon, and Geof is much excited about that. At school Bill is still his greatest friend. They have important discussions together as to their future career, but Bill has failed to persuade Geof that a Parliamentary life is the best to adopt, and Geof has not yet convinced Bill that a soldier is the only thing to be.

A STORM IN A TEA-CUP.

BY SELINA GAYE.

VIII.

JUDY IS NOT CONVINCED.

'WELL, Judy, what are we to do with you?' said Cousin Hester, looking at the culprit, who had just been telling her story, with a good many sobs, and was now looking a comical picture of misery, her face red and stained with tears, and her short curly hair in the utmost state of disorder.

'What *are* we to do with you? Must I have the trap-door fastened up and never let you out of my sight or Marie's?'

'I didn't think——'

'No, that is the very thing—you didn't think; but then you ought to think, oughtn't you? Do you know we may be very thankful that it is no worse than it is? though, indeed, it is bad enough, for Nanon will not be able to put her foot to the ground for a long time, I am afraid, and she will have a great deal of pain to bear, and I shall have to find some one to take her place while she is laid up, and her poor mother will have to be told, and she has quite trouble enough already without this; and all this happens because—why, Judy?'

'I did not think.'

'Yes; but is that the root of the mischief, do you think? It was very thoughtless certainly, and Nanon might have been very dangerously hurt, or even killed; yes, Judy, she might indeed—she might have been killed, and you may be very thankful that she is not; but, of course, I know it was quite an accident that the basket slipped, and you did not mean to hurt her, that I fully believe. But you did want to tease her. Well, I don't mean to say that there is any harm in a little teasing now and then, if it is real fun, not unkind fun, and is not carried too far; but I am afraid you are much too fond of it, and when once you begin you don't know when to stop. I know you have treated Dulcie a great deal better lately.'

'Oh, but I *haven't*,' said Judy, with a great sigh, 'I teased her just a little last night, and I teased her *ever* so much this morning—Fando too. I don't know why, I felt as if I must.'

'Well, what are we to do about it? what do you think yourself?'

'I don't know,' said Judy soberly; 'I wish I hadn't got a tongue at all, or I could have it cut right out.'

'It would be better to learn to use it properly, wouldn't it?

Besides, you did not hurt Nanon with your tongue, so we should have to cut your hands off as well, and, indeed, I don't feel at all sure that we should have succeeded in making you safe then.'

'Fando said it was "idle hands" that made my tongue get into mischief,' said Judy comically, 'but I can work and talk too; I'm sure I don't know, I can't help forgetting, and it isn't only forgetting——'

'No, I am afraid it is not, where Dulcie is concerned, and because you don't see how you hurt her, you don't think of it. Perhaps, if you were to see, you would be as much shocked as you are at what you have done to Nanon; and, Judy, some day, when it is too late, maybe you will see what you have done. A scalded foot is bad enough, but you may give worse pain than that even, if you go on indulging your love of teasing and mischief.'

'I am sorry, Cousin Hester, really I am.'

'Yes, but what am I to do to make you remember? There is not much use in being sorry to-day, if we forget to-morrow, is there?' and Cousin Hester put her hand on the frizzy black head in her lap.

'Perhaps I had better write and tell Daddy,' suggested Judy, in a melancholy tone; 'he would be dreadfully angry, and I dare say he would tell you what to do, if you don't know.'

'I think we will try something short of that first. I should be sorry to vex him, but I hope that it will not be necessary, and that by the time he comes to fetch you, we may have something pleasanter to say.'

'Perhaps if I went and looked at Nanon's foot every day——'

'You shall go and see Nanon certainly, and you must try and think of all that you can do to help her to forget the pain, and to show her how sorry you are. You can read French pretty well now I think, and you might, perhaps, read her a story now and then to amuse her, if she likes. And I have been buying some stuff to make warm clothes for Perrine's children. Marie is going to cut it out, that the shapes may be right, and then, Judy, I think it would be a good thing for you to come and work here in my room for half an hour every day.'

'By myself, all alone, do you mean?' asked Judy, twisting round on her stool and looking up in Cousin Hester's face in great dismay. Needlework was not pleasant to her at any time, but the idea of doing it alone was simply dreadful, and she began to beg that they might all work at the clothes together, even if it were for a whole hour, as that would not be half as bad.

'But, Judy, you do want to get the better of that troublesome little tongue of yours, don't you? I am sure you do, when you give yourself time to think; and don't you think that the best way to punish it and make it behave better for the future, will be not to let it talk at all for a little while? I think Daddy would say that it deserved as much as that, don't you?'

'Daddy would send me to bed, and box my ears besides, I expect, and be done with it! I shouldn't mind that half as much! I hate working all by myself,' moaned Judy disconsolately.

'If you don't do something you really mind, you will forget again directly, I am afraid; and I think if you are in earnest, as I hope you are, you will do this, but I shall leave it to you to do as you please,' said Cousin Hester gravely.

'Very well, I'll do it,' Judy said, with a resigned sigh; 'you might have said something worse, you might have sent me to live in the Tower altogether, mightn't you? but you don't know how hard it is not to tease Dulcie! The things come into my head, and they *will* be said, and besides, Cousin Hester, she *is* underminded—I am certain sure that that Englishman *is* a friend of hers, or else why does she turn so red?'

'Simply because you have teased her and made her uncomfortable, I believe. Remember, she told you plainly that she did not know any Englishman here or at Dinard, and naturally she is annoyed. I don't say that Dulcie is perfect—nobody is—and, of course, it would be better if she were less—less touchy, shall I say? and could laugh things off, or pay you back in your own coin; but if you say that you can't help teasing, she may say that she can't help being vexed, don't you think? I dare say it is hard—I quite believe it is—but you *can* hold your tongue if you try, and I hope you won't say a word more about this imaginary friend, or I really shall be very angry. There! now give me a kiss and go and wash your face, and make yourself tidy for dinner.'

And Judy departed. She was very very sorry about Nanon, and she meant to try and hold her tongue, and she would not say any more about Dulcie's friend, as Cousin Hester had told her not, but still—no! she was not a bit convinced! Cousin Hester had not seen what she had seen, and if she were told she would only think it was all fancy, and nonsense; but Dulcie *did* know something about him, if he wasn't a friend—that she was certain sure of! What a bother it was that she had ever come to Plancöet! They had got on ever so well without her, and really, when you came to think of it, you know, it was all her fault—Nanon's foot and all! Of course it was she herself who had 'fished' in the kitchen and let the basket slip—she knew that, and she was dreadfully sorry, and she meant to do all she could to please Nanon, and show her how sorry she was, and she would tell Daddy and ask him for a nice present for her; but if it had not been for Dulcie most likely it would not have happened, because most likely Fando would have been with her and Willie, and then they wouldn't have 'fished' or let go the basket or anything, and she wouldn't have had to go and spend half an hour alone every day. She wondered whether that was to go on all the rest of the holidays, until they went back to England. Cousin Hester was very serious about it, very, but she was very kind too, and perhaps if she really could manage to try hard, tremendously hard, she might let her off before the end of the time; but she didn't care about Dulcie, and she never should!

Dinner was a more sober affair than usual that day, and when it was over, Uncle Russell, Jack, and Alick went off to the river, for it had cleared up, as Cousin Hester thought it would, and promised to be a brilliantly fine afternoon after the heavy rain.

Fando was condemned to stay in on account of her throat, but Mademoiselle Rioulle had kindly offered to take Dulcie, Judy, and Willie for a walk; and Marie, whò had commissions to do in the town, was to meet them at Madame Aubert's, and bring them back.

'Dulcie looks rather white to-day; is anything the matter, do you know?' asked Cousin Hester, as she and Fando watched the party start, from one of the drawing-room windows.

'She was rather tired last night I think, and she got up with a headache, and she did seem worried, because she could not get on with her letter to Aunt Mary. I don't think there was anything else, except that poor Judy really was naughty, and tormented her worse than she has done for some days now, and Dulcie can't help showing that she minds, which makes her go on all the more!

'Poor Judy! I think she is very much subdued, for the present at all events. Whether it will last is another matter, but I think she is safe for the rest of the day, or I would not go to the Mairie to-night; indeed, I wanted to give it up, but my father has so set his heart upon my going, that I don't like to disappoint him without real reason.'

'Oh! no. I am sure Judy will be very good this evening, and I am not at all afraid of the boys, unless she is in one of her wild moods, and that she won't be certainly.' And then some of the garments intended for Perrine were brought out, and they settled down to a good long afternoon's work and talk, Fando much enjoying the treat of having Cousin Hester all to herself, which was seldom possible with such a houseful.

The field-paths were wet from the rain, and Mademoiselle had therefore chosen the Rue de Dinard in preference; but even that had its drawbacks, for most of the cottage-doors were open, and from them proceeded not only the sound of loom and spinning-wheel, but also cats, which afforded Rip and Rough more occupation than was desirable.

There was a message to be left with Perrine, whom they found at home, withered, but smiling in spite of dirt and evident poverty. The house, of which she occupied the ground-floor, was solidly built of stone, as are most of the houses in this land of granite, but the floor was just the bare earth, and uneven into the bargain, while the ceiling was black with smoke, and the tiny window, with its little pink curtains, boasted but one pane of glass, the place of the rest being filled with straw. Many of the houses indeed had but a slit in the wall for a window, and crazy wooden shutters to close at night, without any attempt at glass whatever. On the hearth was a tripod, supporting the large pot, in which the daily potage was cooked, and the chief furniture consisted of a carved chest, an oak table and bench, beds in recesses in the wall, and, last but not least, a spinning-wheel, with which Perrine was now busy.

Here the dogs very nearly got themselves into sad disgrace, by rummaging about and finally hunting a couple of hens who were quietly discussing family-matters in a corner of the apartment, and such a hubbub of chucking and barking ensued that Mademoiselle Rioulle beat a hasty retreat. They were in trouble again, however, before they reached the actual town, where they were condemned to be chained, as their nerves were kept in a state of excitement by the extraordinary number of cats which were constantly scampering across the road.

'Poor Rip!' said Judy, as Rip van Winkle came back to her shrieking, after an encounter in which he had got decidedly the worst of it. 'Poor Rip! but you shouldn't, you know! She *was* thin and ugly certainly, and I dare say you never saw a cat such a queer colour before—I never did. She was bright brown, wasn't she?—*bright* brown!—and it was enough to provoke any little dog that has always been accustomed to respectable tabbies all his life. I dare say you felt as if you *must* fly at her, didn't you? I know you did, and I expect I should feel just the same; some cats do make you feel like that, but still, you know, you shouldn't! Your Cousin Hester would be sure to say you shouldn't, and I shouldn't wonder if she were to chain you up for half an hour every day to teach you to think before you bark! But you've got a scratch on your nose, poor boy, haven't you? and if I were you I would just feel contemptible to those silly-coloured French cats, and let them quite alone!'

Mademoiselle had proposed that, as Dulcie had not yet seen what she called, 'Le Square de la Duchesse Anne,' or 'Jardin Anglais,' they should go there and look at the view from the chestnut terrace, or, if they liked, from the old tower of S. Catherine, which she declared was perfectly charming, and not to be matched in all Brittany in clear weather.

Far down below in the valley flowed the blue Rance, crossed by the little old bridge, over which, in former days, passed all the vehicles which came from S. Malo; after which they had to climb up to the Porte de Jerzual, the most ancient of the remaining gates, and then mount the steep street of the same name, which is a stiff climb, with its slippery cobble-stones, even for those on foot. There were the pointed grey roofs of the Rue du Petit Fort climbing up the steep side of the granite hill, and there were luxuriant orchards, old towers and walls, with here and there modern houses and villas half-buried in trees, and the 'port' and quay, which had once been busier than they were now; and then farther up the river to the right was the great granite viaduct with its ten fine arches spanning the valley and rising, so Mademoiselle said, a hundred and thirty feet above the towing-path.

Judy might not be particularly interested in having the panorama explained, but when Mademoiselle began to speak of the guillotine which had been set up during the Reign of Terror, though happily never used, in the Place Saint Sauveur, through which they had just passed, she did not feel bound to listen and be 'improved' any longer.

'I knew they'd get back to things that happened in the "year dot," somehow,' said she, 'and they'll manage to bring in that old Constable before they have done, I know! Ah! yes, there they go at the siege of Dinan, and there's "*Kantorbie*"! Well, he didn't deserve to be an Englishman, so Mademoiselle may torment his name as she likes and I shan't interfere. Willie, let us see whether we can find any chestnuts under the trees, I should think they ought to be ripe.'

When next Judy paid any attention to her companions, they seemed to have got from Duguesclin to Henri IV., and Mademoiselle was telling of the peasant Pépin, who had announced the capture of the town to the King, saying, 'Sire, j'ons prins Dinan!'

But then she went on to something which gave promise of being a little more interesting, for she had spent the previous winter near Henri's birthplace, the Castle of Pau, and while there she had heard a story, a real true story, and not an old one, for it happened but the other day and the people were alive still.

'Hé bien!' and Mademoiselle looked at Judy and smiled, as she saw her draw nearer and prepare to listen, 'hé bien, then she would tell it to pass the time!'

(*To be continued.*)

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCLXXI.

1702–1705.

BLENHEIM.

THERE are questions the right and wrong of which it is very hard to decide.

The right of inheritance by primogeniture was clearly with the Bourbons, but, by promise and oath at the Partition Treaty, Louis XIV. had renounced this; and it is hard to say whether the will of Charles II. justified him in breaking these engagements and setting his grandson on the throne of the undivided Spanish dominions; but it is also certain that he was actuated chiefly by ambition, while he held the bequest as an excuse.

On the other hand, the Allies did not so much care for the abstract right as for preventing France from being the preponderating power in Europe, threatening their safety and liberty. It was, in fact, a war for the balance of power that Anne entered upon at the outset of her reign.

It was to be decided whether the Archduke Charles of Austria should reign over Spain, the Netherlands, and the Indies, giving up the other possessions; or whether Philip of Bourbon, Duke of Anjou, should keep all undivided, and thus increase his grandfather's overweening power. Leopold was, by this time, sure of all the German Princes except the Elector of Bavaria, and in especial had won over the Elector of Brandenburg by consenting to his taking rank as King of Prussia.

On the 15th of May, 1702, war was proclaimed simultaneously in London, the Hague, and Vienna; and the Kingdom of Portugal, which had been hostile to Spain ever since its revolt under the Duke of Braganza, was under King Pedro, nearly decided on an alliance with the United Powers.

Moreover, when Philip V. had met his father-in-law, the Duke of Savoy, in Italy, he had treated him with such regal etiquette as to deny him an armchair in his presence, and thus gave great offence. The neighbourhood of an Austrian army under his cousin Eugene was enough to decide Victor Amadeus in favour of his old friends the Austrians, in spite of the marriages of his two daughters.

The first blow of the English was to be struck in Spain, where Drake had struck her before, at Cadiz. A fleet of twenty Dutch and thirty English ships was fitted out, with transports and lesser vessels, and a body of 14,000 men embarked. The Duke of Ormond was generalissimo, and under him were Sir George Rooke, as Admiral of the Fleet, the land troops being divided between Sir Henry Bellasis and the Dutchman, Sparre. The division of command was most unfortunate; Ormond was inexperienced and not strong-handed, and the others did nothing but dispute and waste time, while, on the other hand, the Governor of Cadiz was the Marquis of Villadarias, one of the noblest type of Spaniards in character, and of very considerable ability, who used the time allowed by these disputes to the best advantage by getting in supplies of provisions and ammunition, and in training such troops as he could get together. After much hesitation, an attempt was made by the invaders in an inlet called the Bay of Bulls; but there was a heavy surf, twenty boats were upset, several men drowned, and every one was drenched, ammunition and all. In this condition they were attacked by Villadarias with his best horsemen; but he had not been able to collect any large body, and was repulsed by the English grenadiers. The little fortress of Rota was given up to the invaders by the governor, the only man who joined them during the whole expedition. A letter was sent from thence to invite Villadarias and the people of Cadiz to declare for the Archduke. The answer was, 'The Spaniards change neither their religion nor their king.' The people of Rota had been well treated, but in the suburb of Santa Maria the soldiery could not be withheld from plunder of the houses and churches, knocking down and stripping the images, and thus horrifying the pious peasantry. Villadarias hovered about with his cavalry, and retook Rota, hanging the traitorous governor, and after a month it was decided to re-embark, as Colonel Stanhope wrote, 'with a great deal of plunder and infamy,' the generals throwing the blame of failure on the admiral, and the sailors on the landsmen.

However, on their way home, they learnt that the great West Indian fleet of treasure with a small French and Spanish convoy had put into Vigo Bay. There, headed by Ormond himself, a vigorous attack was made with complete success so far as went the destruction of the galleons with eight million dollars; but of this, full half went down in the burning ships, and not above half was carried off by the English. The loss was, however, most crippling to Philip, who not only lost the treasure he expected, but all the remnant of his fleet, and had thus to trust to the French navy, thus greatly offending many of the Spaniards, especially the hereditary Admiral of Castille, Don Juan Eusquez y Cabrera. Hoping to keep him out of mischief, Porto Carrero obtained his appointment as Ambassador to Paris, but, after starting as if to go thither, he turned aside into Portugal, telling his suite that it was by orders from Court. From Lisbon he published a manifesto declaring the late King's will a forgery, and transferring his adhesion to the Archduke Charles. His nephew left him, returned to Madrid; but most of his suite followed his example, and he had the grace to return the money advanced for the expenses of his embassy, before applying himself with all his might to forward the cause of the Archduke and procure his presence in Spain.

In the meantime, the Earl of Marlborough had been sent to take the command in Holland, parting from his wife at Margate in an agony of grief. 'I have neither soul nor spirit,' he wrote to her during the crossing. He had a severe task before him as generalissimo of the English and Dutch, with two Dutch generals joined in the command, the Prince of Saarbruck and the Duke of Athlone, British only in title, besides that their High Mightinesses always obliged their armies to be accompanied by deputies, civilians, but whose consent was made a matter of necessity, and whose caution hampered him at every step. Nothing but his wonderful patience and never-failing courtesy could have overcome these difficulties.

The object of the campaign was to take those frontier towns of the Spanish Netherlands which Louis had begun by seizing, and which endangered the Dutch neighbourhood. In spite of all impediments, Marlborough succeeded in taking four of these—Venloo, Buremont, Stevenswaelh, and Liège, before he had to put his army into winter quarters. He then set out on his return to England, travelling in a boat upon the Meuse while an escort of cavalry rode along the bank. In the dark, the guard missed him, and the boat was challenged by a body of the enemy; but one of the attendants chanced to have about him a French pass, once granted to Marlborough's brother, General Churchill, and this, being handed up, saved him from being captured. At the Hague all believed him to be a prisoner, and when he arrived there in safety crowds cried, 'Welcome, welcome,' and many shed tears of joy, such an impression had his remarkable ability and his gracious demeanour already made.

On his arrival in England there was a public thanksgiving, and the Queen was resolved upon making him a Duke. His wife hesitated, not thinking the means sufficient for that rank, on which the Queen sent a demand to Parliament to settle £5000 a year upon him and his heirs from the revenues of the Post-office. The Commons had the good sense to refuse, whereupon Anne granted £2000 a year out of her private purse; but this Sarah then refused, only in after times to claim it! The denial of this pension by the Tories made the new Duchess a vehement Whig; but exultation in their added rank was soon taken from the Duke and Duchess by the loss of their only son, the Marquis of Blandford, a promising lad of seventeen, who was completing his studies at Cambridge before serving under his father in Holland, when the small-pox cut his career short, in spite of the attendance of the Queen's own physicians and the tender care of both his parents. Marlborough was always most affectionate in his family relations, and grieved deeply. Four daughters were left—Henrietta, Anne, Mary, and Elizabeth, of whom Anne, Lady Sunderland, was the most like her mother, both in beauty and in temper.

The Spanish admiral was at work at Vienna. He had persuaded King Pedro of Portugal that only on the adhesion of that country to the Grand Alliance would Leopold send his son to Spain, and he next persuaded Leopold that Portugal would not move unless the Archduke Charles would come in person. Leopold was very unwilling, for Charles was his favourite son, and Joseph, the elder, had only daughters; but he at length consented, on the pledge of Pedro to maintain an army of 23,000 foot and 5000 horse, in return for which Charles was to marry a Portuguese Infanta, and cede some important frontier towns; but this last article was to be kept secret, as it was sure to be very offensive to the Spaniards. So, in the September of 1703, Leopold and Joseph solemnly renounced all prior claims, and Charles was sent forth to win his kingdom, but so ill provided with money that he was obliged to pawn his jewels in Holland.

While Charles was there, intending to cross to England, there raged one of the most terrific storms that has ever been known, on the 26th of November, 1703. It destroyed sixteen of the best ships in the navy with all on board; it filled the Thames at London Bridge with wrecks dashed against each other: it tore up the trees in St. James's Park, among them that planted by Henry, Prince of Wales, on which Charles I. had looked affectionately on his way to the scaffold; it rolled up in scrolls the lead on the roofs of the churches; it destroyed the first Eddystone lighthouse; it caused the deaths of many persons by the fall of chimneys. The most noted were Dr. and Mrs. Kidder, who were killed in bed in their palace at Wells. On the tidings, Queen Anne immediately sent to Ken to beg that he would return to his diocese of Bath and Wells, without taking any oaths, as if returning from a journey. He had, however, been fourteen years ejected, and was an aged man, who felt unfit to resume the toils and responsibilities of the Episcopate, and he offered, for the sake of the unity of the Church, to make a formal and canonical resignation of his See to whomsoever the Queen would choose. Accordingly she selected his friend Dr. Hooper, Dean of Canterbury, as Bishop; and he remained spending his peaceful old age between his nephew Izaak Walton at Salisbury and his friend, Mr. Thynne, at Longleat, receiving from the Queen a pension of £200.

On the 26th of December, the Archduke Charles arrived at Portsmouth, where he was received by the Duke of Somerset, who took him to Petworth in Sussex, there to meet Prince George of Denmark. The roads were in such a condition that the journey from Windsor took fourteen hours, the last nine miles, six hours, with three overturns, and the aid of the country folk who walked by the side of the coach, supporting it, and dragging it out of the mud!

The journey to Windsor on the 29th was somewhat less unprosperous, and the King of Spain, as he was termed, spent three or four days at Windsor, where he presented the Duke of Marlborough with a sword, and the Duchess with a diamond ring. The conversation was in French, but was very dry and dull, and Charles did not make a favourable impression. In fact, there never was a war on behalf of two such dull, helpless puppets as were the two rival Kings of Spain.

Charles was carried by the fleet under Sir George Rooke to Lisbon, where he arrived on the 6th of March, just after the death of the Infanta Teresa, who had been intended for his wife. However, public mourning was suspended, and her father, Don Pedro, paid him all honours; but the Portuguese army was in a wretched state of disorganisation, and all that the first movements effected was to bring down on Portugal the Duke of Berwick, who had much of the ability of his uncle, Marborough, and was far too much for such generals or troops as that kingdom possessed.

But Louis, in his old age, with a country fast becoming exhausted, had four wars upon his hands—in Italy, in Spain, in the Netherlands, and in Germany.

It was on the last of these that he founded the chief of his hopes, since the near neighbourhood of the states of his ally, the Elector of Bavaria, to Austria might, he hoped, enable him to strike a blow at the heart of Leopold's dominions.

He therefore sent Marshal Villars into Bavaria with 15,000 men, which raised the forces there to 40,000, while Tallard was to join them from the Rhine with another army at Ulm, and thence to advance upon Vienna.

Prince Eugene, the most trusted Austrian general, wrote to Queen Anne, describing the peril and entreating help. Marlborough obtained permission to go to Holland, and concert measures with the Dutch for the Emperor's relief, and by his wonderful courtesy and command of temper he succeeded in getting permission to act, and to lead into Bavaria an army of about 40,000, partly English, partly Dutch, and the rest Germans. On the 29th of May, he reached the City of Maintz, where the Electoral Bishop reviewed the army, and was struck by their fresh and cleanly appearance. 'These gentlemen,' he said of the officers, 'seem to be all dressed for the ball,' and the whole army was in good spirits and pleased with the expedition, although under King William their success in pitched battles had always been more than doubtful.

On the 9th of June, Prince Eugene with his forces joined them. The tall, calm, handsome, fair English general, and the lively, fiery, little dark Savoyard, were delighted with one another, and a friendship began on the spot. The German General-in-chief, the Markgraf of Baden, soon after joined them, and, as Eugene had warned the Duke, was a difficulty. He was a good officer, but not a great captain, as were both the other two, and he asserted his rights of seniority so as to impede their action. Marlborough and Eugene wished to act together in Bavaria and leave the Markgraf on the Rhine to watch Marshal Villeroi; but the Markgraf held to his priority of choice, and Eugene had to go to the Rhine, promising to do his utmost to prevent the second French army from crossing into Bavaria.

The Duke and the Markgraf commanded on alternate days, and in Marlborough's day, the 2nd of July, he gained the victory in a skirmish on the Schellenberg. Very unwillingly he was obliged to lay waste the country up to Munich, but in the meantime Marshal Tallard had made his way to Augsburg, and joined the Elector of Bavaria, so that their united army was far stronger than that of Eugene or Marlborough separately.

The Markgraf was besieging Ingoldstadt, so that they could move without him, and Marlborough hurried to bring up his troops to coalesce with those of Eugene on the plain of Hochstadt by a difficult march, for the Danube and several other rivers had to be crossed in a swollen state from recent rains; but on the 11th of July the English army began to arrive, and the rest came up on the 12th.

Eugene and Marlborough took a survey together from the top of Dapfheim Church tower, and beheld the enemy marking out a camp on the other side of the little river Nebel, between the villages of Blenheim and Latzingen, and they agreed to attack them while in the confusion of settling into a fresh encampment. Many of the officers were averse to this plan, as they had only 52,000 men, and the enemy 60,000; but Marlborough knew that waiting would only give Villeroi time to come up with reinforcements, and was resolved on immediate battle, as was on the other side the Elector of Bavaria, who fancied the Allies were going to retreat on Norollingen and talked of forcing them to give battle.

By the night of the 13th, the Allies were on the bank of the Kessel, a little tributary of the Danube. Beyond the river lies a small plain, seven miles long, with wooded hills to the north, and the Danube to the south. About the middle of the plain the Nebel joins the Danube, with the village of Blenheim at the meeting point. All round the river there was swamp, as far as the slight rising ground on the west, where the French and Bavarian army was encamped, in two separate divisions some distance apart, under Tallard and the Elector.

On the morning of the 13th of August, before sunrise, Marlborough's army was across the Kessel, hidden by the fog, which did not clear till seven o'clock, when the French found all their outposts and pickets running in, and perceived that the battle was imminent.

Tallard began to strengthen Blenheim, pouring so many troops into it that they impeded one another. Marlborough had prayers read by his chaplains at the head of each regiment, and, with humanity unusual in that day, posted the surgeons in the places where they might be most available. He had to wait till Eugene should have made his very difficult way over the swamps and across the Nebel to attack the Elector, so that only a cannonade passed, till at twelve o'clock an aide-de-camp brought tidings that his highness was ready.

Then Marlborough sent Lord Cutts to force the village of Blenheim, and the Salamander proved his right to his name, for, under a tremendous fire of grape-shot, he directed the laying of fascines (i.e. faggots), for the crossing of the morass, and then General Rowe walked right up to the palisade of the French, and stuck his sword into it before he gave the word to fire. This brave man was, however, mortally wounded, and the French were under cover, while the English were unprotected, and had no heavy artillery, so that the battle, though furious, did not win the place at the time, though it kept a mass of French occupied.

Eugene, at the same time, had desperate fighting at his part of the Nebel, and was three times driven back by the Elector and Marshal Marsin.

Marlborough, however, had crossed the river with his infantry, who then laid down fascines for the cavalry, fighting all the time. The cavalry, when on firmer ground, formed in two lines and charged. Tallard, who was very shortsighted, had galloped to find out what the Bavarians were about, and without deputing his authority. The first charge was, however, repulsed, but the second, made with double force, broke the French lines, and Tallard, riding back in haste, blundered in among the English, and was made prisoner.

Here was the victory. The main body of the French were driven back on the marshes, many sank there or were drowned in the Danube, many surrendered, and some escaped. Those in Blenheim, cut off from the rest, were forced to surrender to General Churchill, and the Elector of Bavaria and Marshal Marsin saw that it was time to retreat. They were not pursued, for night was coming on, and there was danger of friends being mistaken for enemies. Marlborough, even before all was over, wrote to his wife in pencil on a leaf torn from his pocket-book, 'I have not time to say more, but to beg you will give my duty to the Queen and let her know that her army has had a glorious victory. M. Tallard and two other generals are in my coach, and I am following the rest. The bearer, my aide-de-camp, Colonel Parke, will give her an account of what has passed. I shall do it in a day or two by another more at large.'

The Duke had been seventeen hours on horseback, and took his first rest in a water-mill close at hand. In the morning he and Eugene surveyed their gains and losses. They had 12,000 prisoners, but 12,000 of their own were killed and wounded, and 28,000 French and Germans.

'They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won,
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun;
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.'

However, Marlborough grieved for these horrors and did his best to mitigate them, showing all politeness to Marshal Tallard, who had lost a son in the battle.

It was the first great decisive battle—Blenheim, or Hochstadt, as it is called on the Continent—the English had won on the Continent since Agincourt, the first great defeat the French had suffered by land since Pavia, the only such experience that Louis XIV. had yet had. The tidings came during the rejoicings for the birth of a great-grandson, the child of the Duke of Burgundy, and no one dared to tell the King till Madame de Maintenon had prepared him to hear that he was not invincible.

The Lincolnshire people believed a figure on a white horse to have been the omen of victory.

At home, Queen Anne went to St. Paul's in state to give thanks; and a medal was cast in honour of the victory, with Marlborough's handsome profile and Eugene's ugly one vis-à-vis, and on the reverse a confusion of men, horses, woods, and river. The two commanders showed no petty jealousy, and Marlborough was the first to proclaim that, save for the difficulties of the position, the Prince's success would have been equal to his own; even Leopold was grateful, perhaps all the more because of a report that a sculptured angel in the church at Loretto had moved its wings; while a candelabrum presented by himself, suspended before the shrine of the Blessed Virgin, had risen, and one given by Louis had sunk. He wished to make Marlborough a Prince of the Empire, but the Duke desired to have a principality instead of the bare title; and the magnificent grant of the old royal demesne of Woodstock was a far more substantial reward. With little regard to old associations, the place received the name of Blenheim, a new mansion was to be erected at the national expense, the design being by Sir John Vanburgh, and the model of the building presented to Queen Anne, who kept it in her own apartment at Windsor.

The Elector of Bavaria would not desert the cause of the French, but retreated with their army, leaving his wife to make what terms she could to prevent further devastation. She was forced to surrender all the remaining fortresses, and the Austrian Government took the country into its hands.

Loudon was then besieged—unhappy place—for the third time within three years, and in the meantime Marlborough paid a visit to Prussia, to induce the King to lend 8000 soldiers, to be paid by the English, to support the Duke of Savoy in Italy. At home there was much murmuring at the expense of the war; and in Spain matters looked ill, for, while the French army was commanded by an exceedingly able Englishman, namely Berwick, the English army was committed to foreigners, first to the Duke of Schomberg, who was by no means equal to his father, and then to the Earl of Galway, the Hugenot de Runigny, cousin to Lady Russell, a brave man, but no tactician.

However, one most important advantage was gained, though all that it involved was not at first perceived.

The Prince of Hesse Darmstadt, who had been Governor of Catalonia, hoped to accomplish a rising there in favour of Charles, and was sent thither in Sir George Rooke's fleet; but the people would not join him, and Sir George, expecting an attack from the French squadron, would not remain on the coast. On the way back, however, a sudden attack was made on Gibraltar, the key of the Mediterranean, the old Lion rock, a pillar of Hercules, the Geb al Tarik of the Moors, and with a Moorish Castle and rampart of Charles V. Like all Spanish fortifications, it had been neglected; there were only one hundred men in the garrison, and on August 3rd, while the sentinels on the well-nigh inaccessible east rock were celebrating the eve of St. Dominic, a party of English sailors scaled the height and another party under Captain Whitaker stormed the rampart on the South Mole head, and succeeded in spite of the springing of a mine, that killed and wounded forty of them. The place was taken possession of for Charles III., and Darmstadt remained there while Rooke sailed home, and had an engagement with the French fleet off Malaga, in which both sides claimed the victory, and public thanksgivings were offered both in London and Paris.

To manage a royal court on the other side of the Pyrenees, as well as to carry on four wars at once, was an undertaking beyond the powers even of Louis XIV., especially in his old age, and when his best assistants had passed away, and, as Madame de Maintenon said with some exaggeration, he had many courtiers but not one general.

To keep order among the royal family was perhaps his greatest perplexity, though his grandson, Philip V., was docility itself. Louis was learning that such docility meant being managed by the nearest person. The young King was passionately in love with his lively, clever wife, Louisa, and she was devoted to her Camerera Mayor, Princesse des Ursins, an ambitious woman, bent on ruling, and by no means as amenable to directions from Madame de Maintenon as had been expected.

She was the only person who was a pleasant companion to the clever, girlish Queen, who found all the Spanish ladies insupportably dull, and kept them at such a distance as to give great offence. Cardinal d'Estrées, the French Ambassador, tried to govern as if he had been the native Prime Minister; and the two, though equally disliking the Spaniards, were perpetually quarrelling and sending complaints of one another to Versailles. The Cardinal was recalled at the request of the Princess, and his nephew, the Abbé d'Estrées, whom she thought her friend, was appointed in his room; but while he appeared to be devoted and obsequious to her, he was turning her into ridicule in his French correspondence.

Suspecting something, the Princess had his letters intercepted, and sent them with marginal notes of her own to M. de Torcy, the foreign minister at Paris. However, it was on her that the wrath of Louis XIV. fell, and he sent orders to recall her; but, knowing that she and the Queen would work upon Philip, he delayed doing so till the young King had joined the army under the Duke of Berwick. Then a letter from his grandfather was put into his hands by the Abbé, ordering him to dismiss Madame la Princesse instantly and to choose between four other ladies as Camerera Mayor. Philip, being out of reach of his womankind, murmured a little, but yielded to the old habit of obedience to *le Grand Monarque*. And at the same time the Abbé had his own recall.

Another Frenchman announced the fiat at Madrid, to which the Queen listened in sullen silence, but the Princess immediately, seeing what part to take, packed up her goods, made no attempt to have another meeting, but wrote in public a letter full of exhortation to submission and resignation, and started the next day. However, she lingered, on every pretext, in the towns on the journey and at Bayonne, and there arranged a system of constant secret correspondence with the Queen; and, though ordered to repair to Rome, she contrived to go no farther than Toulouse.

The Duke de Grammont, clever and witty, was sent as Ambassador, and found the young Queen raging against those who had taken away her friend. The Duke of Berwick would have nothing to do with feminine cabals, and would not assist in any attempt to recall the Camerera, whereupon the Queen insisted that he should be removed, and induced the Duke of Grammont to back her up, probably for the same reason which the spoilt girl gave for her dislike to the high-minded, honourable general; '*C'est un grand diable d'Anglais sec, qui va toujours droit devant lui.*'

Marshal de Tessé, a very incompetent man, was sent in his stead, but very soon quarrelled with Grammont. The Queen showed at once that she meant to be entirely unmanageable, and to make the King the same till her favourite was restored. Whenever anything was to be done, or any change to be made by Louis' wish, Philip remained passive and impracticable, and when Grammont applied to the Queen, as the only person who could move him, she put on a provoking air of meekness, and said, 'How can a girl of fifteen meddle with affairs of state?'

All was at a deadlock, nothing was done, while a rival monarch was on the borders of the country, and the English fleet hovering on the coast. The capture of Gibraltar startled the Courts both of Spain and France, and Louis perceived that he must propitiate this angry girl if he meant to hinder her from letting her husband lose his crown. He consented to permit Madame des Ursins to come to Versailles to justify herself, and this secured her victory. She won over by her flatteries and ingenious representations both Louis and Madame de Maintenon, and the urgent entreaties of her Queen for her recall seemed about to be granted.

Grammont took alarm, and persuaded King Philip's Confessor, a French Jesuit, to try to show him that he ought not to be ruled by his childish wife and her favourite. Under this influence, the young King wrote secretly to his grandfather, begging that the Princess might be kept away; but Louis knew him too well to believe the mood would continue, and saw that he must be governed through his wife, and that she must be conciliated.

Indeed, Philip had already turned round, and told his wife of his letter, and the inducements to write it, and they had joined in writing to entreat for Grammont to be removed, and the Princess restored. Louis entirely gave way, seeing that this was the only chance of getting anything done in Spain. The great lady was almost supreme; she was allowed to choose the Ambassador, President Amelot, and she was treated by the Spanish Ambassador, the Duke of Alva, as if she had been his sovereign. She did not bear her honours as meekly as did Madame de Maintenon, but behaved with what the French courtiers felt as insolence and sneered at accordingly, especially when she appeared at a ball carrying in her arms her little dog, which was several times patted by the King! She made an immense favour of going back to Madrid, and, when at length she returned, the King and Queen both came out two leagues from the city to meet her. Thus curiously enough three great kingdoms were under the influence of three ladies. By the unimpeachable evidence of their own familiar letters, Madame de Maintenon, on whom the dignity had been thrust, was the wisest and ablest of all, as she was also the most religious, conscientious, and thus the most self-controlled, and truly modest, humble, and disinterested. The Duchess of Marlborough was not irreligious, and was a virtuous woman, not devoid of public spirit or patriotism, but in her all was marred by a domineering character, a violent temper entirely uncontrolled, and a deficiency in all ladylike refinement. The Princess Orsini, the highest in rank by birth, was no doubt much better mannered than the Duchess, but was far inferior to both the others in all essential qualities, and, belonging in a measure to three countries, had no patriotism nor any principle, either of private or public duty. While Françoise d'Aubigné cared above all for her King's salvation, the good of those around her, and, as far as she understood it, for the religion and welfare of the country; and Sarah Jennings for the glory and benefit of her husband and of England; Anne Marie de la Tremouille seems only to have thought of her own aggrandisement, and to have played off the two Courts so as to retain her position without regard to the true benefit of either of their countries.

LECTURES ON CHURCH HISTORY GIVEN AT WINCHESTER.

BY THE EDITOR.

SECOND SERIES.

I.—(*continued*).

S. GERMANUS established schools for the education of the clergy and the strengthening of the faith. At the head of Llan Iltut, still called Llan Twit, was St. Iltud, a kinsman of King Arthur, and here were educated many of the very numerous saints of Wales and Brittany. St. Germanus visited these colleges a second time in 446, and found the heresy creeping both among the few Scots who were Christians in Ireland, and the Southern Picts, where there was a mixture of heathens and Christians. Picts and Scots are mixed together in our imaginations, but in point of fact at this time there were no Scots in Scotland, only Picts—Pechten—the true Caledonians. They were apparently Cymry, though this is quite as doubtful now as when Mr. Oldbuck and Sir Arthur Wardour quarrelled over the word Penval, the only undoubted one remaining of their language.

They had been partially subdued by the Romans as far north as the wall of Antoninus from the Firth of Forth to the Firth of Clyde. Here, between that wall and that of Hadrian, reaching from the Tyne to the Solway, lay the Province of Valencia, containing a few Roman settlements and garrisons.

The first dawnings of the light seem to have been among these Romans, but legend sends to the eastern coast an hermit named Regulus, or Rule. He was said to have come from Achaia, impelled by a vision of St. Andrew, bringing with him a priest, two deacons, eight hermits, and three virgins. They landed among the cliffs, where they dwelt in caverns, and built a church. St. Rule's cave was long an object of pilgrimage, and still exists. The Palmer tells Marmion—

'I have solemn vows to pay
And may not linger by the way,
  To fair St. Andrews bound.
Within the ocean cave to pray,
Where good St. Rule his holy lay
From midnight to the dawn of day
  Sang to the billows' sound.'

This, however, is all legend, and is chiefly worth mentioning as accounting for the connection of St. Andrew with the ancient university, and with Scotland itself.

The first missionary to the Picts of whom we have any security was one of their own countrymen, though belonging to one of the places where Roman colonies had brought Christianity, namely Whithorn in Galloway. His name was Ninian, or as it is strangely corrupted, Ringan, and he was bred up as a Christian. When he was twenty years old they sent him to study at Rome, where he spent many years in the Italy of St. Ambrose and St. Jerome, and imbibed a truly apostolic spirit. Pope Siricius consecrated him, and gave him full commission to endeavour to convert such of the Picts who were still heathen. Visiting the great St. Martin at Tours on the way, he obtained masons to build a stone church at his native home in Galloway. It was the first building of stone in those regions, and was called the White House, or Candida Casa. This was the centre of his preaching, and of the missions that he led and sent forth not only in Caledonia, but in Ireland. Many miracles are ascribed to him, which need not here be mentioned, but there still remains a rude bell, called Clogrinney, the bell of Ringan, so ancient that archæologists believe that it may have a right to the title.

Bells seem to have been often connected with these Celtic missionaries, who probably carried the smaller ones about to attract their hearers. In 429, another Roman missionary named Palladius was sent by Pope Celestine to Ireland, where the few believers were in danger of accepting the Pelagian heresy as a mark of nationality. Thence he crossed into North Britain, and after a course of preaching died at Fordun, and left his name to Paddy's Chapel, Paddy's well, and Paddy's fair. In Ireland the Scots dwelt. They were undoubtedly of the Gaelic division of the Celtic race, a larger, taller, fiercer race than the Cymry, and possessing the strange mass of heroic songs relating to the Feen, Fingal, and his heroes, which is commonly called Ossianic, from their chief bard. It has features in common with the heroic tales of other Aryan nations, especially the story of the champion with one vulnerable spot, who is killed by treachery. This hero, Diarmid, is the supposed forefather of the Campbells, whose cognizance, the wild boar, commemorates his exploits. About the fourth and fifth centuries they were making descents upon the countries round, at first forays in order to obtain slaves; but in Caledonia gradually leading to settlement and conquest in Argyleshire.

In one of these slave-hunting expeditions, a boy called Succat (strong in war) in Celtic, Patricius in Latin, was carried off to Ireland by the subjects of King Nial of the Nine Hostages. This we know on the authority of his own confessions, but the place of his home is matter of controversy. He calls it Bonavem Taberniæ—the first word is certainly the Celtic Benavon, the headland near the river, but this is as much a word of the continental Celts as of the insular ones, and it was the old name of Boulogne-sur-Mer, while Tabernia is the district of Terouenne. On the other hand, Kilpatrick near Dumbarton, which lays claim to be the birthplace of the saint, would seem to be a more likely place for an incursion from Dalriada, now County Antrim.

The father of Patrick was a Roman citizen, and held a civil office at Bonavem, besides being in deacon's orders, and his wife was sister to St. Martin of Tours. It was from his villa, Enon, that Patrick and his two sisters were carried off. What became of the sisters does not appear, but Patrick was sold to a chief named Miliac, who set him to herd cattle on the banks of the river Braid. He had hitherto been a careless, thoughtless boy, but in the hardships he suffered from frost, rain, and hunger, he found comfort in prayer and recollection of home teaching.

After six years he dreamt that a ship was on the coast, and taking this as a heavenly intimation, he ran away, found the ship, and was taken back to Bonavem, where he was received with joy by his parents, who hoped that he would never leave them again.

However, Patrick believed that his trials were so much training proving that his call was to convert those who had made him captive. Visions came to him in the night of a man who brought him an epistle headed 'Vox Hibernionarum,' and therewith he heard the voices of the natives of a wood, which he had known in Ireland, calling, 'We entreat thee, holy youth, to come and henceforth walk among us.' Again, he heard words spoken to him in the night, of which he could only understand the end, 'He Who gave His life for thee is He Who speaketh in thee.'

His purpose was fixed, and he felt the call so definite as to disregard the entreaties of his parents. He prepared for his mission by studying first under his uncle, the great St. Martin of Tours, and then under St. Germain at Auxerre, and he accompanied the latter in his first expedition to Britain in 430.

By this time he was prepared for the work in Ireland; and here begins one of the great questions, whether the Gallic Bishops themselves commissioned him or sent him to Rome to be ordained and receive authority from Pope Celestine. His own confessions do not mention such an expedition, and other authorities conflict. At Evreux, he heard of the death of Palladius, the only Bishop of the Scottish converts, and he was therefore consecrated before proceeding further.

His first great success was at Slane; Tara or Temora was one of the most sacred places in Ireland. The spot is surrounded with huge barrows, the tombs of ancient kings, resembling those lately examined by Dr. Schleimann, and near these was the Druidical Temple, and the extensive, but only one-storied palace of the King of Meath.

At the spring equinox a great festival was held to celebrate the return of the sun after the winter. Every fire and lamp was extinguished to be rekindled from the sacred flame in the temple. There were five kingdoms in Ireland, the four familiar provinces and Meath, which always belonged to the chief king. Under these there were numerous clans or tribes, with land held in common and mostly at bitter feud with one another. The life was very wild and savage, with rough plenty of cattle, and specially of geese, and some barbaric splendour among the kings.

Patrick landed in County Down in the kingdom of Meath. He met a swineherd who led him to Sabhull or Saul to his master, Dichu, the first convert of this mission. Next he made his way to his former lord, Milchu, but on the news of the runaway slave's approach, Milchu, in dread of magic, set fire to his dwelling and burnt himself to death. His sons, however, became converts.

Now Patrick, in accordance with the Eastern customs, many of which had passed to the Gallican Church, was wont to light up his lamp at midnight at the hour of the Resurrection. From his tent the light was seen; King Laoghaire (Lear) galloped to the spot, accompanied by two of his priests, who declared that his kingdom would be ruined unless the sacrilegious deed was expiated in blood.

The King, however, on coming near the spot, dismounted, seated himself on the grass, and bade his followers do the same while the offending stranger was brought before him. As Patrick came forward, all present' sat still in wrathful silence except one little boy, who sprang forward to salute him. The boy, whose name was Here, became a saintly Bishop of Slane. The King appointed the next day for a hearing, and a controversy with his priests. It was then apparently that, to illustrate the mystery of the Holy Trinity, he gathered the shamrock, the three leaves in one. Like everything else connected with St. Patrick, the shamrock is disputed, as to whether it be a species of trefoil, or the wood sorrel, the Alleluia flower; indeed, Professor Stokes forbids us to believe in the story. Laoghaire was not convinced, but he permitted Patrick to preach freely.

There is great confusion about Patrick's subsequent work, but it is certain that his great triumph was the overthrow of the Cromcruach, or sloping black stone in County Cavan, a huge stone, surrounded by twelve lesser ones, objects of worship to the Irish. He drew up a creed in the form of a hymn, beginning with—

'I bind to myself to-day
The strong power of an invocation of the Trinity,
The faith of the Trinity in Unity.'

It is too long to repeat here, but it is exceedingly beautiful, and is to be found in Dr. Maclear's 'Celts,' or Todd's 'Life of St. Patrick.'

His mission really turned the scale in Ireland in favour of Christianity, and he had numerous fellow-labourers, often sons of chiefs or petty kings of tribes, whom he instructed, and finally made priests and bishops. He had some remarkable female converts likewise—Ethne the fair, and Fedlima the ruddy, daughters of King Laoghaire, who, coming to a fountain in the morning, saw Patrick and his followers worshipping, white robed, and took them for fairies. The conversation by which these maidens were gained to the faith is recorded, and is wonderfully simple and beautiful. They died soon after their reception of the Holy Eucharist, but Bridget, who belonged to a family of early converts, lived to be the leader and foundress of many Sisterhoods under the care of St. Patrick, from the centre at Kildare, the Cell of the Oak. She became the favourite female saint of the Scots, both in Ireland and after the migration to Caledonia, where she is known as St. Bride.

St. Patrick's system was to establish numerous monasteries as centres of instruction. These were clusters of the roughest of little huts, like the Lauras of Egypt, built of any material at hand—loose stones, sods of turf, branches of trees, and moss. Wood was much used, as indeed there seem to have been then more forests in Ireland than at present, and the church was often called 'Duirthech, the House of Oak.' There was a larger shed where all ate together, and often a mill and a kiln for drying corn. The whole was enclosed in a rampart, or sometimes placed on an island in one of the loughs. The Bishops lived in these monasteries, and were generally under the authority of the Abbot. Some of the monks transcribed the Scriptures, and gradually a very wonderful and original style of illumination and ornament grew up, which we still see in their manuscripts and in their carved stone crosses, where great use is made of combinations of the circle. Devotion was constant and fervent, and much labour in the field was carried on by the younger monks, their monastic vows counteracting their natural indolence, so that ground was brought into cultivation, and civilisation began to dawn.

There is reason to think that Oisean or Ossian, the last survivor of the Féen, was contemporary with St. Patrick. That fragment where he complains of the psalm-singing of St. Patrick's old women, which Hector M'Intyre tried to translate, is a genuine one. Hosts of legends cluster round St. Patrick, among which the most familiar is that of his expelling snakes from Ireland, which is certainly free from them, though this is probably owing to its insularity.

He held two synods at Armagh, and the See became the seat of the primacy. When he went to choose a site for the church, he found a roe with a young fawn lying where the altar now is. His companions wanted to kill them, but Patrick took up the fawn in his arms, and the roe trotted after him to a place of safety.

He wrote his confessions shortly before his death, at his retreat at Sabhull or Saul on the 17th of March, 467, leaving Ireland a Christian land. It became the Island of Saints, and very odd saints they were, according to our notions—intensely devout, very ascetic, sitting for whole nights up to their necks in cold water, chanting prayers and psalms, and yet apparently with no great horror of cursing or of bloodshed. Even the monasteries had faction fights with one another.

Yet the Scots who drifted over to the Isles and the west coast of Scotland were regarded as more polished than such Picts as had not been in contact with the Roman settlements. They had established another kingdom of Dalriada in Argyle and the Isles, north of the Pictish kingdom of Strathclyde, which reached from the mouth of the Clyde to that of the Mersey. Strathclyde had been partly converted, but after the Romans had been recalled from Britain, there was much apostacy, and heathenism began again to prevail. It was then that Kentigern came forward; he had been brought up by St. Serf, who called him Mungo, or the loveable, a title by which he is even better known than by his proper baptismal name. He recalled many to Christianity, and founded numerous monasteries, or clusters of cells, where dwelt the recluses, known since as Culdees, or servants of God.

He is esteemed especially as the Apostle of Glasgow, which the arms of the city and university commemorate in a curious legend. Ryderch Hoel, or Roderick the Liberal, was much attached to Kentigern, but his wife was a woman of light and vain nature. One day, when resting, during the hunting-party, the King beheld on the finger of a sleeping attendant a gold ring which he had lately given to his wife. He contrived to take off the ring so softly as not to awaken the sleeper, and threw it into the river. Then going home, he demanded of the Queen what she had done with his ring, and condemned her to the flames if she did not produce it in three days. In pity for her, St. Kentigern prayed earnestly for a respite in which she might repent; and, within the time, a salmon was caught in the Clyde, and, when cut up in the prisoner's presence, proved to contain the fatal ring.

A tree, with a salmon on one side, and a ring on the other, is therefore to be seen on the Seal of Glasgow, the city of St. Mungo.

SKETCHES OF OLD NORSE LITERATURE.

II.

EARLY MYTHIC AND HEROIC POEMS, WITHOUT DATE, AND BY UNKNOWN AUTHORS, OR THE ELDER EDDA.

The first ray which falls from the light of history on the Teutons reveals their delight in heroic poetry. Tacitus tells of the old songs which were their only kind of chronicle, and how they spoke of the god Tuisco and his son Mann, the founders of their race. There were old lays extant in the time of Charlemagne, who caused many to be written down and committed to memory; but his successor, of whom a Norse Saga tells that 'he did not allow men either to smile or play,' had them destroyed as relics of heathendom. Only one old German epic is left, and that in a fragmentary state, the 'Lay of Hildebrand.' Two Latin translations also survive, by Paul the Deacon (obit. 790), of two of the lays about Elfwine (i.e. Alboin) the Lombard king (obit. 572); the originals were probably contemporary with Ceadmon's Anglo-Saxon poems. They are vigorous though rude poems on the youth and death of a hero, and sufficiently resemble some of the older Icelandic lays to show the continuity of Teutonic poetry.

In Anglo-Saxon two or three old lays or songs yet survive, besides 'Beowulf,' an epic poem, part of which is of true value, but apparently diluted by later and inferior additions. In England the old poems seem to have fared badly in the hands of their early monkish transcribers. It is to the north we must turn to find the finest specimens of the Teutonic heroic epic. And for more than that; we seem to emerge from the childishness and limitations of early mediæval ideas into a clearer atmosphere, a manlier cast of thought, and even, in some respects, a higher school of ethics.

Fouqué, who, though no great antiquarian, had studied the middle ages with the intuition of genius, in one of the little songs in his 'Magic Ring,' sums up well the drift and sentiment of the poetry of old Norway.

'Here the love of arms is wakeful,
Here the Skald his lay is weaving,
With a healthy flow it telleth
Of the faithfulness of beauty,
Of the valiant warrior's prowess.'

Compared to other secular literature of the early middle ages, the old Norse is emphatically healthy, manly, and sensible; often full of [illegible], yet generally free from mediæval coarseness: dwelling ever by preference on the courage and honour of men, and the faithfulness and wisdom of women. On the other hand, it shows the national defects of carelessness of human life and the fostering of revenge, and also the full acceptance of the old rule that 'those should take that have the power, and those should keep who can.'

In making such comparisons we should remember that the best scholars in the South were then apt to drift into the cloister life, and there devote themselves rather to theology or philosophy than to national literature. Still remains a sense of wonder when we turn from Anglo-Saxon or High German verse to the Eddas, or from the childlike romances to the manly Sagas; how came that rough uncivilised society to produce such good literature? Partly, maybe, that their strong energies needed some expression in art, and they had none except ornamental wood and metal work, and therefore spent the power in story-telling and poetry that elsewhere, during those times, built cathedrals and wrought statues and mosaics. There seems no doubt that the later mythic poems are touched by Christian influences enlightening a pagan creed.

Before going further it should be said that these studies, especially of the poems, are a good deal written on the lines laid down by the late Gudbrandr Vigfusson, an Icelander whose extraordinary learning and enthusiasm for research was aided by every facility that could be given him by Oxford and the Scandinavian universities. The present writer can never forget occasional meetings with him, and the kind, simple manner which flashed into enthusiasm when speaking of the history, or reciting the poetry, of his native land. Besides much work of restoration of old texts in Icelandic, he was the joint author* of the 'English-Icelandic Lexicon'; and his editions of the 'Sturlunga Saga,' his 'Corpus Poeticus Borealis' and 'Icelandic Reader' have really opened the doors of this literature to the English student. The last book may be recommended especially to beginners in the subject.

First, then, in point of antiquity we find the collection of very old poems by unknown authors, commonly called the Elder or Poetical or Sæmund's Edda. The title is a misnomer, and was never heard of till A.D. 1634—the date of the revival of literature in Iceland—when some scholars seem to have assigned the re-discovered old poems rather according to fancy to the earliest great author Sæmund the Wise, or to Snorri Sturlason. The Edda till then was especially the title of one of Snorri's books on the rules of poetry and synonym, and a poet was said to know his 'Edda' or not, as he was more or less skilled in the craft of verse-making according to these rules. In fact, nothing is known of the collection called the 'Elder Edda' but what can be gathered from the internal evidence of the poems themselves, and comparison with others of known date. They are original compositions of the Northmen between the ninth and the early twelfth centuries. The earliest existing MSS. are of the early thirteenth century, but quotations elsewhere show that earlier MSS. accessible to mediæval writers have perished. Many of the poems are fragmentary, and eked out by sentences of very ancient prose, as if the memory of the dictator had failed, and he had filled up the gaps with prose narrative. It seems clear that they were only written down from dictation just in time to preserve them, and by Icelanders, who were the first northern scribes, but poets and men of the world rather than churchmen. It is also clear that the poems are not so ancient as has sometimes been supposed. They are in old Norse, a language differing from modern Icelandic rather as Shakespear's English does from that of our own day. Their alliteration cannot have survived much change of speech, and further they are written with a brilliancy and complication of structure that shows they could not have been translations. Modern philologists have ascertained that the Norse language changed greatly about the eighth century. It parted from the original Gothic and kindred Anglo-Saxon, and old High German, for a development all its own. The roots are so like those languages that the nations may have fairly understood each other for ordinary wants when the literature and poetry had drifted widely apart. The Norse was modified by the character of the people; it became more terse and strong. Many initial syllables and inflections were lost, and gutturals were discarded, greatly to the improvement of the sound. The vowel power is now greater than in any other Teutonic language, and the construction more free. Clear and flexible, as if formed by orators, it became, from the tenth century, capable of great varieties of style; direct and incisive in the prose of the Sagas, and elevated and noble in verse. Those who have heard Icelanders recite old poetry can understand how the alliterations and assonances—the 'staff-lines' or burdens—the stress-syllables and regular pauses, must have given something of the measure and rhythm of music, delighting the hearers, and aiding the memory of learners by complex devices which could not survive much change in the language.

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* Mr. Powell was the English co-laborator in these works, all published by the 'Clarendon Press.'

To one precious though incomplete MS. (*Codex Regius*)—together with two others, not copies but more fragmentary—we owe our knowledge of the noble Elder Edda poems, which but for them would have perished. They consist of Ethic, Mythic, and Heroic poems, and are probably not earlier in date than the eighth, nor later than the early eleventh century. Among the most ancient is *Hávamál*, i.e. the High one or Odin's speech; moral teachings on friendship, love, war, and the conduct of life generally. The teachings are heathen, but show great insight into the unchanging element of human nature, and much honourable feeling and common sense. Here are a few specimens from a prose translation of the precepts for guests and travellers.

The ancient Teuton guest has need of great caution on first arriving. 'The wise guest glances into all the corners,' but his speech is most courteous, in hopes he may find no foes. 'Hail, giver (or host), a guest has come in; where shall he sit?' 'Cold in the knees is he who has travelled in haste on snow shoes*—he needs food and dry clothes who comes over the hills.' 'He should make himself pleasant to the host and hostess.' 'A man who travels far needs his wits about him, anything will pass at home.' The guest keeps a watchful silence at first; one feels the atmosphere of dangerous times, when men carried their lives in their hands. A few lines taken here and there from the poem will give some idea of it, but it is all worth reading. 'No man can carry better baggage on his way than wisdom; no worse wallet can he carry than ale-bibbing.' 'It is a far way to an ill friend, though he live on one's road; but to a good friend there is a short cut, though he live far off.' How English is the following. 'One's own home is the best, though it be but a cottage. A man is a man in his own house. Though thou hast but two goats and a hut of hurdles, that is better than begging.' How friendly is this. 'Once I was young and travelled alone, then I went astray. I felt rich when I met a man; man is man's joy.' But the poet had not many illusions who wrote 'Little are grains of sand; little are drops of water; little are men's minds, for all are not wise alike; half are dunces,' and 'No man is so good but there is a flaw in him, nor so bad as to be good-for-nothing,' and 'Tell one (a secret), not two; what three know, all know.' The good advice about early rising in a verse which tells how the wakeful man's wealth is half won, has a touch of the Viking in the next lines. 'Early should he rise who would win another's chattels or life: seldom a lying-down wolf gets a joint, or a sleeping man victory.' The last verse applies rather to our own times. 'The money he has made, a man should not spare; for often the loathed get what was meant for the loved. Much goes worse than hoped.' Of the Hàva màl proper, supposed to be spoken by Odin, only a fragment now exists, as is proved by early quotations and paraphrases. It tells how Odin learned wisdom by hanging nine nights on the tree of life, and gives many mystic runes and charms. Included now in these fragments are a collection of old sayings and counsels to a certain Loddfafni—traditional ethics of pre-Viking days. Some of the saws are not complimentary to women, as, 'At evening praise the day; a woman burnt (buried), a maid married, a sword tried, ice crossed, ale drunk.' And again, 'To love a false-hearted woman is like driving an ill-bridled, wild, two-year-old horse on slippery ice, or sailing in a rudderless ship with a gale behind her, or like setting a lame man to catch a reindeer on the thawing hill-sides.' Surely a climax of impossible situations. However, the following touches men: 'Let no man trust an early sown acre, nor too soon a son; weather makes the acre and wit the son, each is slippery.' The saying, 'Short are ship's berths,' lets us know that the Vikings felt the discomforts of the sea, and 'The tongue is the head's bane,' tells of the mischief wrought by words.

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* Eirikur Magnusson's reading of an obscure passage.

To this oldest group belongs the old play of the Wolsungs, the most ancient surviving form of the story of Sigurd and the curse of the gold. This was probably written just when the old poetry was dying down, to be replaced by a newer school.

Through all the poem, as in the later ones on the same subject, runs the story of the curse on the hoard first taken by Loki from the Rhine elf, to pay the ransom of the Asa, or gods, to the giant. 'Here is the gold,' says Loki, as he pays it to Hrodmund, the giant, and his son, 'but it shall be the death of you both. They who shall be under its curse are still unborn.' 'I fear not thy threats,' says Hrodmund, 'get home.' But soon he is killed, and Fafnir, his son, has the gold, and broods over it in dragon form till Sigurd the avenger slays him; but not before he prophecies: 'Boy, the ringing gold, the fire-red hoard shall be thy death.' Then Regin the dwarf, his brother, plots to kill Sigurd, who therefore slays him and wins the gold and with it the curse; though unlike the dragon and the dwarf, he carries all lightly, saying: 'The cheery man fares better than the whiner, whatever befall him.' Then Sigurd is slain by his wife's brothers, who win the hoard and the curse. The story is continued in the old lay of Atli or Attila, when these brothers are lured by their sister, now the wife of Atli, to the court of the Huns. The youngest brother, Hogni, is there treacherously slain, but Gunnar the eldest, exclaims as he laughs for joy, 'Mayst thou be as far from all luck, Atli, as from the hope of the treasure, for the whole hoard is hidden with me alone now Hogni is dead.' And refusing to reveal its hiding-place he dies in torture, but singing a song of triumph. Hamdis' song follows, a gloomy working-out of the curse on a younger generation who never enjoyed the gold. This wild tale of the fatal treasure has doubtless some historical basis in the time of Attila when, owing to the fall of Rome, enormous wealth fell into the hands of the barbarians, and portentous demoniac characters rose above the fierce crowds half-maddened by slaughter and plunder.

In this old drama nothing relieves the gloom but the noble counsels of Sigrifa—the Brunhild of the later poems—to Sigurd. One hears the wise brave woman of the north encouraging and teaching her hero lover how to meet the difficulties of life. Eleven counsels are given, most of which are good to this day. One verse recalls 'Macbeth.' 'If an evil witch be in the way, better go on than sleep there though night overtake thee. Men need foreseeing eyes where the fray rages, for balewise women often stand by the way blunting swords;' and again, 'Swear no oath except it be true; perjury strikes fearful roots,' and 'Though high words be banded at a feast, never quarrel with drunken men; wine is a wit stealer; ale has often brought grief of heart, death to some, to some curses.' This suits the times. 'Trust thou never the oath of an outlaw's son, if thou hast slain his brother or father. There is a wolf in a young son though he be comforted with gold.' But a higher feeling inspires another; 'Care for corses wherever thou find them, be they sick-dead, or sea-dead, or weapon-dead. Make a bath for the departed, wash his hands and head, comb him and dry him ere he be put in coffin, and bid him sleep sweetly.'

There is true lyric beauty in the runes or charms she chants to the hero. Here is one—

'Runes of sea shalt thou grave, if thou wilt save the sea-steeds afloat. Grave them on bow and rudder-blade, and mark them on the oar. Be the waves ever so steep or the billows ever so black, thou shalt come safe from the deep.'

But we turn with pleasure from the earliest version of the Volsung story to its treatment by a later unknown poet of perhaps the tenth century. Here the language is the fully formed best Icelandic, and love and jealousy, wrath and tenderness, are woven into the story of the hoard. The long line of the old poems is replaced by the shorter epic line—used by the English Cynewulf. Vigfusson says that there are 'possibilities of almost endless modifications of this metre, which for ductility and power of expression was not equalled till the Elizabethan dramatists developed the full power of Iambic blank verse.'

The two destroying heroines are finely contrasted; both are rather the sport of evil fate than willingly guilty. The fierce but honourable Valkyr Brunhild, who had fallen under Odin's displeasure, and slept in her golden mail till woke by the kiss of Sigurd, had all her hopes of happy wedlock with him frustrated by the magic draught by which Grimhild, the witch-mother, turned Sigurd's heart from her to her daughter Gudrun. Then Brynhild, unwittingly betrayed by Sigurd into marrying the wrong man, but not knowing that *he* was beguiled by magic arts, urges her husband to slay her real lover. Only when Sigurd lies dead before her all is discovered, and she repents utterly, and slays herself, to be burnt on his funeral pyre. And not herself alone, she says: 'five bondsmaids decked with necklaces; eight men—my nurse and my fosterer—two horses, two hounds, and two hawks, that all may be shared equally between us; and the doors of Hades shall not swing on his heels if my company follow him.' In most of the poems Gudrun is a gentler character, though in the Atli lay written in Greenland, she becomes a furious avenger. There is much beautiful poetry, and also strong sketches of character in the various poems of this cycle. We can only especially notice one called the 'Woes of Gudrun.' We are told how she sat by the corpse of her slaughtered lord nigh unto death but unable to weep, she was so oppressed her heart was like to break.

The gentle gold-decked ladies try to soothe her, by each telling her bitterest sorrows. The story of the Queen of Humland rises in the original to the highest pathos.

'My seven sons, and my husband the eighth, fell in battle . . . the wind of the deep played over them, the billow dashed them against the gunwales. They had none but me to wash them, none but myself to lay out their corpses . . . then, for seven years I was held a prisoner of war . . . I had to dress and bind the shoes of the lord's wife every morning. She would threaten me with her jealousy, and drive me with stripes. Never saw I a better lord nor a worse lady.'

Still Gudrun could not weep till a maiden swept the sheet off Sigurd, casting it to the ground before his wife's knees. 'See thy love,' she says, 'lay thy lips to his, as if thou clasped him living' . . . 'then Gudrun wept so that her tears soaked through her tresses,' and amid passionate lamentations she speaks again the doom—the curse of the hoard: 'Never shalt thou profit by the gold, Gunnar; those rings shall be thy death.'

Fine as some of the Volsung lays are, we think that the Helgi poems in parts surpass them in imaginative pathos. Of them we have only fragments, apparently taken down from the mouth of reciters who could not remember all. The plot is in all three parts built on the same lines. A young hero wins the love of an Amazon and marries her. After various adventures he is killed by her brother in the height of his glory, and she joins him in the grave. It would almost seem worth while to learn Icelandic to enjoy the splendour of language, and, for all their wild remoteness, the intense human passion of these and others of the choicest poems. Helgi the hero is not unlike the ideal knight of chivalry in his readiness to redress wrongs, his honour, and his devoted love.

Sigrun the heroine, however, differs from the lady of romance; indeed, she is more like a knight herself. The clinking lines describe the 'mail-clad lady riding up—the glittering light on her spear-point.' 'As she reins in her steed the battle tumult lulls,' while she answers Helgi's invitation to a feast.

'Other matters have we in hand, prince, than to birl at the ale with you.' She wishes for help or rather allies to deliver her from a king to whom her father had pledged her hand, 'though,' she adds, 'I hold him, Helgi, no better than a cat's son.' In the war which follows, Helgi unfortunately kills her father by accident. Hence a blood feud, and after some time Sigrun's brother finds it his painful duty to slay Helgi. Her denunciation of this brother is terrible in its fierce brevity, the negative suffix to the verb giving in three words the five English equivalents.

'May that ship not speed that should sail under thee, though there be a fair wind aft; may that horse not run that should run under thee, though thy foes are following after; may that sword not bite that thou shouldst draw, except it sing about thine own head,' etc.

Afterwards her handmaid comes to tell of the strange procession she has seen of mounted warriors riding by in the gloaming. She had asked who they are, can dead men ride, or if the twilight of the gods had come? 'No,' was the answer; 'it is no mere phantom thou seest, nor the end of the world, though we prick our steeds with the spur, but we have been granted leave to come home'—his time is short—'I must be west of the sky-bridge before chanticleer awakens the mighty host.' It is for love that he cannot rest in death while his lady weeps 'cruel tears' for him. 'Every one of them falls dank, cold, chilly, fraught with sobs on my breast,' he complains. So at night 'when the earnes are nodding on the trees and all the people flock to the dream-meetings,' Sigrun goes to his cairn and makes her bed there, glad to join him in death, and Helgi says, 'Let no one chaunt wailing dirges though they see the wounds on my breast. Now are maidens, royal ladies, shut up in the barrow with us dead men.'

The idea of the distress of the dead at the over-sorrow of the living found its way into Danish and Scotch ballads after the old poem had been lost sight of.

Equally fine is the 'Waking of Anganthur,' the Viking, the unlucky possessor of a magic sword which, like the Volsung gold, carried a curse with it. Like the gold too, it had been unjustly taken from a dwarf, as if some remorse for the plunder of weaker races did haunt the Teuton mind. The valiant maiden Hervor is determined to possess herself of this sword buried in her father's tomb. She arrives at the desolate island, glimmering with corpse fires, terrible from the hauntings of the restless dead; a shepherd warns her against lingering there by night, but in vain. She summons her father's ghost to resign his trusty weapon; he gives it up at length with a warning of the curse, which at last, after many victories, falls upon the Amazon. The poetry is very fine, but as untranslatable as the 'Descent of Odin,' another fragment well known through Grey's translation from a Latin version. Grey has also given a trim classical version of the 'Lay of Darts,' a Valkyr chant said to have been heard by a warrior in Orkney celebrating the battle of Clontarf in Ireland, A.D. 1010.

Vigfusson has a theory that many of these later poems were composed by Northmen in the Western Isles and Ireland. This hardly seems possible of proof, but a strong Celtic influence may undoubtedly be traced in many of the poems; the melancholy, the mystery, the felicity of language show the touch of the conquered race, while the masterful spirit, fearless alike before natural and supernatural dangers, proves them to be essentially Norse. For in Celtic legend we constantly find the mortal succumb to the fate the Norseman defies; he is carried away by the fairy who becomes the tender wife of the Teuton; but he is often possessed of an ideal, which, if illusive, is more poetical than the more practical aims of his conquerors. But in those days many a roving Norseman married a Celtic woman, and thence no doubt sprang a mixed race, who united the qualities of both. It is curious that of several Skalds, we are told they had dark hair and eyes, and rather ugly noses—Celtic features all; and to this day the deep blue eye and black hair of Ireland can be met in Iceland, contrasting strongly with the usual complexion.

But though the manner of telling the Edda stories may sometimes be Celtic, the stories themselves are Norse, with the exception of a few which are the property of all the Teutonic nations, and probably of Eastern origin. Such is the legend of Wayland Smith, of which one version is found in a peculiarly wild and fantastic ballad in the Edda, which still survives as a popular tradition in Berkshire, and has always been known in Germany. The smith lamed by a tyrant to keep him to his work, and the enchanted weapons he forged, may perhaps be some lingering tradition of the beginning of the Iron age, and the fall of the tribes who were armed with the swords of bronze.

We may observe then that what for the last two hundred years has been called Sæmund's Elder Edda, is a collection on no particular plan of those ancient poems that happen to have been written down in time to preserve them. Vigfusson gives a useful classification of them according to their probable antiquity.

1. The oldest group. Ethic: *Hávamál*, *Guest's Wisdom*, *Lessons of Loddfafni.* Heroic: *Old play of the Volsungs*, *Old Greenland Lay of Atli*, *Lay of Hamdis.*

2. Mythological poems, chiefly in the form of question and answer or riddles: *Lessons of Valthrud*, *of Grimur*, *of Allwise the Dwarf.* Humorous poems on the gods: *The Slanders of Loki*, and others.

3. The later and finest Heroic lays: *Lays of Helgi*, *Volsung Lays*, *Waking of Angantheow*, and a series of fine ballads.

4. *Völuspá, or the Sibyl's Prophecy;* the highest spiritual efforts of the heathen poetry.

5. The latest Epics on legends of the Goths and Huns: *Lays of Sigurd*, *Brunhild*, *Gudrun*, and *Atli;* the Attila of history.

So far we have only considered literature by unknown authors, but in the next chapter our subject will be the first poets known by name in Iceland.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

BY LOUISA DUNDAS.

II.

We divided the First Book of Samuel into three parts, and have reached the second, chaps. v. to xii., inclusive. Of this part of the narrative the contents are: 1. The events connected with the capture of the Ark, and its restoration, chaps. v. vi.; 2. The repentance of Israel, Samuel's intercession, and the battle of Ebenezer, chap. vii. to v. 14; 3. Samuel's judgeship, and the demand for a king, vii. 15, to viii. 22; 4. Choice and anointing of Saul, viii., ix., x.; 5. Saul's victory over Ammon, xi.; 6. Samuel's address to the nation, xii.

The prominent character in this part of the book is Samuel himself; and yet about this, the last Judge, there is a wonderful quietness and reticence—his influence is felt and implied, rather than expressed. He is not mentioned in connection with the calamity of Shiloh, which from other allusions in the Psalms and Prophets must have been far more bloody and terrible than this simple chronicle would lead us to think. Surely, as we read the story of the Ark of God in the Philistine's country, we are at no loss to understand why this bitter humiliation and chastisement was appointed for God's People? They regarded the Ark, in fact, much as the heathen did, with superstitious reverence as a magical charm. The Philistines, overjoyed at this important prize, carried it to their royal city of Ashdod, and set it in the highest place of honour by their fish-god, Dagon.* It is one of the interesting passages of the Old Testament in which we see our Heavenly Father mercifully revealing Himself to the heathen in ways suited to their comprehension. It is well to note that verse 5 explains an obscure allusion in Zeph. i. 9, the idolatrous practice of clearing the threshold with a leap, in memory of the fate of their stricken idol. In order that the Philistines themselves might be moved to redress the outrage they had committed, the Lord sends a double punishment upon them—disease, and the plague of mice. So terrible were the ravages of this mischievous little animal in ancient times, that the Egyptians in their picture-writings used the mouse as the sign of destruction. The disease known to modern surgeons as hæmorrhoids, was one of those of which God had forewarned the Israelites (Deut. xxviii. 27) in case of their lapse into heathen vices. Reading the story carefully, we are struck again with the similarity of the Philistine to the Jew in the treatment of the Ark. Perhaps it will be better at Gaza, or perhaps at Ekron. But the same results followed for seven months, 'the hand of God was very heavy there,' wherever this symbol of His Presence rested.

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* The worship of composite idols, men with birds', beasts', and fishes' heads, etc., was common through all the East—fish forms prevailing among maritime nations. Specimens can be seen in the Nineveh Room of the British Museum. 'Only the stump' is literally only the fishy part, i.e. the tail.

In chap. vi. we get most valuable insight into heathen thought and feeling. The lords or satraps of the Philistines seek counsel in this national dilemma, as we know Egyptians and Chaldæans habitually sought it, by recourse to priests and diviners, i.e. magicians. But the answer is simple and practical, and shows us what St. Paul means by saying the heathen were 'a law unto themselves' (Rom. ii. 14). They are in the power of an invisible and awful One, they must own it, and propitiate Him at once. Then comes the strong human instinct, of God's own implanting—the desire of propitiation by trespass-offering. The peculiar form recommended is curious, for it is a link between ancient and modern times. To this day we see votive offerings made by unlettered peasants* in forms which remind us of this story of three thousand years ago.

Verse 6 is most striking. Taken in connection with chap. iv. 8, we see how the fame of the Exodus had spread among the heathen nations, and that, even from a heathen standpoint, Pharaoh's insolent defiance of the Almighty had been considered a sin. The words show us there must have been some difference of opinion as to how they should treat this rival Power that had vanquished their god. Should they simply get rid of His Presence, and send the Ark away with no acknowledgment of wrong? No. 'Wherefore harden ye your hearts?' The wiser counsel to self-abasement prevails. A simple and touching test is imposed by the diviners (vv. 7–12). If the kine so carefully selected obey their natural instinct, they will turn back to their own imprisoned calves; if they set their faces towards Judæa, they must be impelled by a higher Hand. So, in spite of the lowing which betrays their own natural impulse, God's dumb creatures declare His will, by turning straight to the borders of the tribe of Judah, and arriving at Beth-Shemesh, on the direct line from Gaza. It is now known as Ain Shem, and its situation is charmingly described by Dean Stanley† as a fine plateau or upland at the junction of two fertile plains, a deep 'wady' on each side. Then there is the picturesque scene of the joyful recognition by the Beth-shemites of the strange procession, as the creatures, heaven-directed, halt by 'a great stone,' one of the basaltic rocks with which these hills are strewn, and there follows that occurrence of the double sacrifice, so significant, so full of prophetic meaning.‡ For once, the Jew and the Gentile met in worship of One God. The Philistines first, using the cart as fuel, offer the kine, and lay their propitiatory gold upon the rough altar, giving 'glory to the God of Israel' (v. 5), and then followed the rejoicings of the Israelites with regular burnt-offerings in the usual way.* On referring to Josh. xxi. 13–16, we see that Beth-shemesh was a regular Levite city, so there must have been priests at hand. Both nations had sinned regarding the Ark, the Jew against higher privileges and greater light than the Gentile. Neither could know the full significance of this, their unwontedly pacific meeting; but God knew, who accepted both for the sake of One whose birth, in the fulness of time, in 'little Bethlehem' of this very tribe, should break down every wall of partition, rend His covering veil from all faces of all nations, bid all ends of the earth come with their thank-offerings to rejoice in the brightness of the rising. And for us, the grafted branches of the wild olive-tree, there is another lesson; as we look upon this touching instance of that which St. Paul described—'the heathen seeking God, feeling after Him if haply they might find Him'—we can understand what they could not, the Love that kept Israel apart from the universal corruption to be the Nation of Jesus. Sceptics have attacked the Mercy of Him who seemed to leave a world to perish; we can read here the Infinite Wisdom and the Divine Patience, combined with that universal Fatherhood upon which St. Paul based his preaching at Athens.

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* In France and Italy, models of limbs, eyes, etc.—in wax, ivory, or gilded metal—hung round shrines, generally as thank-offerings.

† *Vide* 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 476.

‡ There is no exactly parallel instance in Scripture; remarkable as it is, it scarcely seems to be noticed. The 'Speaker's Commentary' mentions the fact of the two separate offerings.

How alike prone to sin were Jew and Philistine we see in what follows (v. 19). There is probably a copyist's error in the numbers of those smitten for irreverently handling the Ark, a sad sequel to the event of that great day. There cannot have been 50,000 inhabitants in the place, and probably 70 was the number of those who died, quite enough to be noted as a great calamity.† A striking suggestion is sometimes made that their rejoicings turned to intemperance, and that thus they forgot the stringent regulations as to handling the Ark. God, who had so plagued Philistia, would not let His people disobey the plain commands given upon this head. Again, there is the touch of superstition in wishing to get rid of the Ark, even while they almost deify it (v. 20). The 'down' and 'up' of v. 21 help to identify Kirjath-jearim, 'city of forests,' with the present Kuriet el Enab, 'city of grapes.' It would be about ten miles from Beth-shemesh, and a high situation, further from the disturbed frontier, with the remains of a heathen altar or 'high place,' Kirjath-Baal of Josh. xviii. 14. Again, we have a verse which properly should close chap. vi. included in vii. It is probable that Abinadab was a Levite, and in His house in this little mountain stronghold, the Ark of the Covenant remained 'in the wood,' overlooked, possibly forgotten to a great extent, for twenty years.

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* Probably peace-offerings as a thanksgiving.

† Dean Stanley and the notes in the 'Speaker's Commentary' give excellent and full particulars as to the probable origin of the mistake, owing to the Hebrew use of letters with dots for numerals. Josephus says seventy men were killed by lightning. Readers should compare Numbers i. 50, 51, iv. 5, 16–20, Exodus xxv. 15, Levit. xvi. 13, for details of the required reverence in approaching the Ark—even by priests.

Chap. vii. v. 2 evidently opens a fresh subject. Israel is oppressed, its southern provinces mourning under a grievous yoke; Shiloh is desolate; worst of all, strange gods are in their midst. It is very difficult, nay impossible, to fix exact dates in this part of the history. Samson may possibly have been judge over one, and Samuel over another part of the country during the same period, in which case there must have been little or no communication between some of the tribes, and few written records. It has been said that the early days of the Saxon Heptarchy afford somewhat of a parallel, probably a still better might be found in the state of the earliest Highland clans, when different chiefs in their mountains and sea-girt isles heard little of each other. With or without dates, the contrast is equally instructive and striking between the two Nazarite judges; the one, who could bear away city gates and bars, yet failing to rule self, who is as 'a city broken down without walls;' and the other, who from his infancy to old age, seems ever distinguished for his calmness, greatest in intercession, mightiest in prayer. Samuel now takes his place, standing between the old and the new, the ruins of the past, and the foundations of the future political state. He is known already as the Seer—the Prophet—whose office it is to tell unto the people that which he hears from God.* Let us pause a few moments over this, his special characteristic. There are various instances of earlier 'prophecy,' but Samuel is the starting-point of God's new dispensation, that of 'the Prophets;' and, by that office, God was preparing Israel, and through Israel ourselves, for one great aspect of the Redeemer's function. If those who can do so, will look in a lexicon at *μάντις* and *προφήτης*, they will see how much was included in the idea of a prophet both by Jews and Gentiles. The Hebrew 'Nabi,' without excluding other meanings, yet added a fresh and most noteworthy element. A 'Nabi' was the mouthpiece of another speaker: 'God spake to our fathers by the prophets.' This 'mouth' had to be 'filled' before it could speak, and that 'filling with the Spirit' was what a Jew meant by 'inspiration'; the 'Nabi' might speak or write the words, but they were *not his own*, as Balaam reminded Balak. In Hebrew minds there was always an idea of 'outburst'—enthusiasm like a spring welling from a hidden source—in prophecy. The man so employed had a 'burden.' This explains Isaiah's openings: 'The burden of Tyre, Moab,' etc. He must get quit of it by delivering the Message of mercy, wrath, prediction, and so on; then he was 'the Seer.'† It might be into the present, past, or future, but he looked into 'the Unseen.' What he there gathered he gave forth as rivers or springs gushing in a dry place—how powerful a metaphor in waterless lands! It is well pointed out by Dean Stanley:* 'Even in the other great class of languages—the Indo-Germanic—the same figure appears, and may fairly be taken to illustrate the Eastern metaphor. *Ghost*, *Geist*, the moving inspiring spirit, is the same as the heaving, fermenting *yeast*, the boiling, steaming *geyser*, the *fermenting*, the *living* element which made the dead mass move and heave, and cast out far and wide a life beyond itself.' Prophets then had henceforward a great part to play in Israel's history; and, as we shall see, Samuel leads the way; he is specially a type of our Lord, in thus standing as mediator (μεσίτης) between an outworn and a new system. Last of the Judges, first of the Order of Prophets, inaugurator of the monarchy. With certain similarities to Moses, he has also peculiarly beautiful characteristics of his own. We take up both from their infancy, the one with his bulrush cradle and his destined crown, the other the Child of the Tabernacle cast adrift in his manhood, not from a king's palace, but from Shiloh's ruined shrine. And now, from Ramathaim-Zophim, after a period of silence, the Voice of God speaks by him as by a new 'Moses,' calling Israel to Mizpeh, to repent, fast, and pray (first putting away their idols), 'and I will pray for you unto the Lord.'

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* Stanley's Lecture xix. will be of great use here.

† Septuagint *ὁ βλέπων*, the man who looks straight at a thing.

The Mizpeh spoken of is probably that not far from Shiloh and Gibeah, the scene of the rash vow in Judges xxi. 1. The solemn 'pouring of water' is an Oriental custom, signifying utter self-abnegation (Psalm xxii. 14); it gains in significance of course where water is precious. The custom became afterwards a great feature, and a joyful one, of the Feast of Tabernacles, alluded to in Isaiah xii. 3, but never understood as symbolic till the day when, during the ceremony itself, Jesus stood and cried (St. John vii. 37). It is probable that this convention at Mizpeh occurred at the time of the Feast, and that thenceforth the memorial 'libation' was continued at the yearly festival. What a chain of thought leading from Mizpeh to Christ! Then we see Israel restored to a right mind, fearing the attack their religious assembly had provoked, but trusting to God only, and, as at Rephidim, to unceasing prayer (v. 9). The 'whole burnt-offering,' always a lamb, was typical not of the putting away of sin, but of the 'whole life dedicated to God.' The words 'God heard' are correctly 'God answered.' And how? By the thunder which responded to His people and discomfited their foes.† And again we are carried forward to the Prophet (John xii. 27–29) who received His answer in thunder from the sky. Close to the scene of the former defeat, the decisive victory of Ebenezer is gained. The Philistines are not only routed but driven back beyond their own border, and their usurped power and possessions reclaimed by Israel. Samuel's judgeship, its principal seats, and his own dwelling at Ramah, where he established a place of worship, conclude chap. vii. Possibly the Tabernacle, now empty of the Ark, was set up there by him, but this is merely conjectural.

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* *Vide* Lectures on the 'Jewish Church', xix. We have condensed his words, those of the 'Speaker's Commentary,' and 'Smith's Dictionary,' Art. Prophet.

† *Vide* Psalm xcix. 6, 8. These called upon the Lord and He answered them (Bible Version). Samuel's intercession is here specially mentioned; and the answer—'the thunder.'

A long break occurs between the seventh and eighth chapters. Nothing is told of Samuel's domestic life, but he has sons, his coadjutors and probable successors, when the history is resumed. These sons are not like Hophni and Phinehas, but they 'walk not in their father's ways' of unsullied justice and righteous dealing. They seem to have been settled in the extreme south, in the tract recovered from the Philistines. And now we see Samuel under a severe and searching trial. The crisis—fore-ordained of God, though he knows it not—has arrived. Israel is again restless, impatient, desirous of a political change, which should consolidate them as one nation, and give them, like other nations, a leader in battle. It is an instance of the deep and blessed knowledge of our complex nature to which we have already alluded, as a mark of Divine inspiration.* The trial is common to every generation of workers for God; the being set aside and superseded, used at pleasure, and then ungratefully discarded. Happy those who, like the knightly monarch in the exquisite semi-legend, see in the 'old order' giving place to the new, 'God fulfilling Himself in many ways.' Happier still those who, in all the keen suffering of disappointed love, of unappreciated service, turn like Samuel and 'pray unto the Lord.' For mark, 1, wounded feeling is no sin, nay, it helps to a higher sanctity, if rightly used; 2. mark the Father's answer: 'they have not rejected thee—they have rejected Me.' So here, God reminds this type of the 'Rejected One,' as the Prototype will one day remind His saints of a later dispensation—that what He can bear they can bear; 'the servant is not above his Lord.' If the rejection be cruel and unjust, He associates Himself with their pain: 'I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.' If our work be 'good,' i.e. proper work, He has prepared it for us to walk in; we need not be discouraged because we are pained at its loss. Turn to God with the trouble, and then implicitly obey His leading as Samuel did, and we know all must be well. And so it was here. We must try to be clear as to Israel's sin; it was not the request itself, but the spirit and temper that was faithless and wrong, as well as ungrateful to God and man. God himself foresaw the crisis and arranged events for it, as we see by Moses' prophecy.† It is not merely predicted but carefully provided for. Scripture is not only the guide of individual souls, but of masses of men. In its pages are the ground principles of all law, order, good government. No alien or 'stranger' was to rule His Chosen

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* *Vide* Introduction to these Papers.

† Read carefully Deut. xvii. 14 to end.

People, and, especially at the beginning of monarchy, no one without God's call. Afterwards we get in germ, at least, the principle of hereditary succession. Thus we see the true meaning of 'divine right,' the powers that be are ordained of God (which was said in a day when rulers were as yet heathen). But in all this lies the answer to rationalist and republican views. Whereas some have said: 'God's government, as revealed to Moses, was a failure,' and 'The idea that God interferes in politics is absurd:' we see the true solution of the history. God educated the world by His dealings with Israel. As long as their ideas of kingly power were associated only with Pharaoh, they could only see in a king a rebel against the Lord. He 'allured them and spake comfortably to them' in the wilderness. Moses and the elders were sufficient in those days. When distinctly military rulers were needed, men were shown a fresh phase of revealed truth in such as Joshua, Othniel, Gideon—captains of the host, warriors for God. The Jews were not by nature a warlike people, and but for this part of their history, Scripture would be—we say it reverently—incomplete; wanting in the lessons which show us of the conflict between good and evil, when the Captain of our Salvation should be manifested in the flesh. But government by military chiefs can only last for a time. It was common among Gothic nations, to whom the 'king,' the 'König,' was only the best warrior, the 'cunning' or 'canning' man. True, the first thought to Israel at this time was 'a king to go before us and fight our battles.' Samuel warns them, at God's bidding, of the converse side—tyranny in time of peace. As nations rise in the scale, life is less and less made up of battles. But with the stiff-necked obstinacy which distinguished them in the Desert, and all through the centuries—even to their last dispersion and present exile—they persist, as wilful people do, not replying to the objections, but repeating their own words; and God again bids Samuel 'Hearken unto their voice.' Samuel knows now that wrong though the manner of the petition may be, the substance of it is according to the Mind of God. He cannot fully enter into the new development, the higher stage of the world's education; the setting up of an authority which of all others was typical of the office of Christ. He is the true Prophet, but when all know God, from the least unto the greatest, the prophet's vocation will cease. He is the Priest; but when all things are purged and reconciled, that especial function will pass away; but 'The Lord is King for ever and ever' shall be sung with endless Alleluias.

Chap. viii. ends with the dismissal of the representatives of the tribes. We next are given the genealogy of Kish, 'little Benjamin' being the tribe first chosen to rule. The names do not quite correspond with those in 1 Chron. ix.; but probably some generations are omitted. The stately presence and personal beauty of the son are mentioned; and then we have the story of his search after property both valuable and easily lost. Saul's course can hardly be traced now, but the search ended in the land of Zuph (Zophim), Samuel's own country. The judge has been on his usual circuit, and is just returned, and preparing to offer a special sacrifice, with the appointed feast in conclusion. Saul comes before us in a pleasing light. His care for his father, justified by the event, his friendly intercourse with his servant, the courteous request of v. 18, and the youthful diffidence and modesty shown in his reception of such news, all help to strengthen the lesson to be deeply taught by his career—how a fair early promise may be belied by later years, how vain it is to suppose that the 'elect people of God' need not strive to make their calling and election sure. The main fact is communicated it would seem without attempt at privacy; evidently the guest is exhibited as one honoured and welcome. The 'top of the house' may possibly have been used as a sleeping-place (v. 25) as well as for a more private interview. Then Saul is bidden to send away his servant, and much more special directions are given and revelations made to him, beginning with the 'anointing,' so solemn an act at any royal accession. There are a good many tokens of the later editor's hand already mentioned. One is the parenthesis of v. 9, chap. ix., and another is probably the explanatory 'where is the garrison,' etc., of x. 5, for this hill was Gibeah, and Saul's home was there, as also one of the establishments for training the young in the technical parts of a prophet's office. Saul is to receive the unconscious tribute of the three men going to Bethel. This was the site of the original altar of the Patriarchs, set up by Abraham, the scene of Jacob's dream, and now perverted to heathen use as a 'high place.' When he meets the prophets with their instruments (all those named were employed in worship from early times), Saul, as we see, is to receive that spiritual power; he is to go on to Gilgal, and remain there in a seven days' retreat until Samuel joins him. Here, we see, he becomes a 'Nabi' himself, a vessel in which God's Spirit is poured 'speaking in the Spirit,' so that the hearers say: How is this? Is Saul, the son of Kish, entering upon this new vocation? Is he in training for a prophet? There was a touch of contempt in the tone: 'But who is his (not their) father?' (v. 12). He is now near his kindred, but he can scarcely even, though anointed, take in the full meaning of the Seer's announcement, therefore he does not speak of it to his uncle.

(v. 17.) And now Samuel gives his delayed answer. He convenes the tribes again at Mizpeh to hear God's Message in its fulness; and again we are conscious of the personal pain, though the words are exactly true. The lot is taken by tribes and families, as it was in the case of Achan (Josh. vii.).* The sudden impulse to hide himself in an excess of fear is natural in the youth, as is the sudden enthusiasm when his splendid figure is pointed out by Samuel. In

* Plainly some names are omitted in 1 Chron., for Matri never occurs again.

place of the oriental, 'Let the King live,' our version gives the fine old English words, 'God save the King.' The 'book' now written and laid up was a kind of constitution, or bill of rights defining the prerogative, probably including Moses' directions. Again, for the last time as ruler, Samuel dismisses the assembly, and a royal guard for the first time—with hearts touched, no doubt, by the answer to the nation's prayer, and the demeanour both of the judge and of the King—gather round the young Saul. But as a contrast, we are instantly shown the lurking evil, the spirit of envious opposition, against which all must watch when they oppose for opposition's sake. Probably, as Benjamin, nearly extinguished in the civil wars (Judges xx.), was at present the weakest of the tribes, this explains the envy. 'They despised him, and brought him no presents;' Saul, with real nobleness, holds his peace. A faint shadow surely (God's will having been plainly declared by Samuel), of the spirit in which Israel would one day say: We will not have this Man to reign over us! Still more strongly we contrast Samuel's own conduct, its perfect faith and acquiescence in God's will, its cordial, courteous, fatherly welcome of Saul. We do not lose him yet; but henceforth his appearance and actions are always in connection with Saul; his requirements, his shortcomings, his terrible and gradual decadence; these will be noticed in their order.

Chap. xi. We cannot be certain of the time occupied in this chapter. It contains the account of Saul's first warlike exploit, one full of righteous enthusiasm, done by inspiration from God.* It will be seen that the Ammonite territory lay eastward of Jordan, and this King appears several times in later history. The savage terms proposed to Jabesh-Gilead were extremely common in ancient times, and signified complete subjection as well as crippling of strength. Like another Cincinnatus, Saul is called from 'the field,' and full of the *afflatus* of the Spirit, he summons the host, Samuel probably accompanying him. After the battle, and the triumphant deliverance of Jabesh-Gilead, popular feeling turns in its full tide to Saul—the people cry out for punishment of the disaffected who had contemned his election. The King's answer is equally generous to man and devout to God, and Samuel takes occasion from the enthusiasm to establish Saul's government yet more firmly by the great peace-offering at Gilgal.

Time must forbid our dwelling on every detail of the beautiful chap. xii., as Saul's reign must be fully examined. We cannot be quite certain of the date of Samuel's last public oration, or how long his single judgeship had lasted. But as he lays down his office, he touchingly reminds his countrymen of the life 'from my childhood unto this day,' and 'I am old and gray-headed,' and bespeaks kindness for his children; again, there is the sense of the wound.

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* A map will show the positions of these places, and how Jabesh-Gilead, lying eastward of Jordan, lay exposed to Nahash.

He asks them to witness before God and the King to his upright government, and this they do. But Samuel has not summoned them to speak of himself. As advocate he pleads for the Lord—the God of their fathers, 'Stand still (or up) that I may reason with you,' going over the different points since they entered Canaan, at which special deliverances had been wrought for them; as St. Stephen did long after in Jerusalem. Commentators vary as to v. 11. Bedan is sometimes taken to stand for Samson; but a better reading seems to be 'Barak,' and then the four chief periods of deliverance are given. Again it is objected that Samuel would not 'glorify himself,' and that the passage marks a late editorship. This can only be said by those who fail to catch the beautiful spirit of the words—like St. Paul's 'not I, but the Grace of God.' The Prophet is still full of love for the old system, and speaks of the time when God was their king. The men, whether warriors or prophets, had been but vessels into which His Spirit was poured. In such a retrospect, the mention of his own rule, at one of the most critical passages of their whole history, linking two stages of national life together, could not well be dispensed with. His whole aim being to fix the hearts of both king and people on the Lord their God, to induce them henceforth to serve Him with their whole strength, self had no place in his thoughts. With full recollection of Mizpeh and of Ebenezer, though no enemy is arrayed against them, he bids them (v. 16) 'stand and see this great thing,' an answer and yet a chastisement, and we see the good effect, fear, and then repentance and confession. Verse 18 may be compared with Exodus xiv. 31; again we see the likeness in Samuel to Moses, the same mediatorial work, foreshadowing that of Our Lord. After the expression of penitence comes the assurance, 'Fear not.' The full meaning of the original would require the mention of 'indeed': 'ye have indeed done, &c.' The people see now the evil spirit of their request—but note, they are not bidden to retrace the step. We often cannot undo what we did in wilfulness; we are bidden to go on, and 'fear not.'* God will bring good out of our evil if only we turn not aside but serve Him with all our heart. They could not know what we know, that the highest stage of God's preparation for the Messiah was reached when the earthly kingdom was set up among themselves. Nor could Samuel know what we know, in reading the beautiful v. 23: he was conscious that the people feared his withdrawal of that wondrous gift of intercession, and he puts away the very idea as a sin: 'I will pray for you.' 'I will teach you.' Unconsciously he showed that the kingly office was not to eclipse or supersede the prophetic; both were to work together. Unconsciously too, he showed—as far as man may do—a Christ-like oblivion of any personal offence, in his desire only for the goodness, the prosperity, the onward advance to a yet higher service of his beloved Israel, the people whom the Lord had chosen for His own. Do we not feel on carefully reading this address, and noting its occasion and the feelings which prompted it, that on the long line of Israel's heroic names, there is none nobler than that of Samuel?

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* On this subject—see Molinos' words to John Inglesant; we commend the whole passage to our readers—too long to quote: 'It may be that in some other place God would have found you other work; you have failed in attaining to that place: serve Him where you are. If you fall lower, or imagine that you fall lower, still serve Him in the lowest place of all . . .' Vol. ii. p. 210.

With chap. xii. concludes the second of the three divisions into which this Book naturally falls. But as the third division contains more events than can well be dealt with in our next, we propose in the present paper to consider a part of the reign of Saul, i.e. the narrative up to the close of chap. xv. The subjects in Part III. may be thus enumerated: 1. Saul's reign; wars with Philistia and Amalek; his sin and rejection: chap. xiii.–xv. (inclusive). 2. Anointing of David: xvi. 3. Victory over Goliath; defeat of the Philistines: xvii. 4. Jonathan and David; Saul's persecution, David's flight: xviii.–xxii. 5. Slaughter of the house of Ithamar, and escape of Abiathar: xxii. 6–22. 6. David's rescue of Keilah and flight; Saul's pursuit: xxiii.–xxvii. 7. Saul's last war; the Witch of Endor: xxviii. 8. David and the Philistine princes; plunder of Ziklag and pursuit of Amalek: xxix–xxx. 9. Battle of Gilboa; Death of Saul and his sons: xxxi.

Samuel's noble figure gradually withdraws into the background, as that of Saul comes prominently forward. It is well at this point to get into our minds a vivid impression of Saul, about whose character there are many permissible variations of opinion.* But to us it seems as if the intrinsic nobleness of the original disposition made the lesson of its downfall all the more impressive. He might serve as an illustration of the warning not to neglect 'small things,' lest we fall little by little. Dean Stanley forcibly contrasts the two men—who by their juxtaposition bring each other into strong relief. Samuel is an instance of a life given throughout to God—advancing gradually without need of sudden transitions, violent changes of purpose. Saul undergoes 'conversion' from a semi-heathen state to the service of God—but he is a standing warning of the danger of relapse, or of conversion not going deep enough. We shall try to exemplify this by the story itself. It will be seen that there is a gap of many years between chapters xii. and xiii.; and of the latter, v. 1 is an obvious mistranslation. It is possible that the later editor did not quite know the sequence of events, and therefore left a blank; but it is certain that a number (in Hebrew a letter) has been dropped out—and that this number, if supplied, would give Saul's age at his accession (let us suppose 30) and possibly the number of years he reigned before the occurrences were narrated.† Saul is evidently a young man, possibly not even married when he first appears, whereas in v. 2 we are told of a warrior-son at the head of a chosen band; foremost in the exploits which are the subject of the chapter. If the passage were completed it would probably run thus: 'Saul was (30?) years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 33 years. And when he had reigned two years Saul chose him, etc.' The dates in the Oxford Bible take no notice of the wide gap between xii. and xiii., but the difficulty caused by the appearance of Jonathan on the scene cannot otherwise be explained than by the loss of letters standing for numbers from the Hebrew text. An interval there must be, of what length does not matter—but slowly and imperceptibly declension of the spiritual life is going on in Saul. The enthusiasm which at one time made him a 'Nabi'—a mouthpiece of the Lord—is hardening into ambition, desire of his own greatness, rather than that of God's people. The country is evidently in a disturbed state of semi-subjection to the Philistines; there are garrisons on all the rocky heights, and at the close of the chapter there is incidental mention of the unarmed and defenceless condition of the inhabitants* (v. 19). The physical features of this —the ancient frontier of Benjamin—the scene of some of Joshua's most splendid victories—speak to this very day of the graphic correctness of this record. The country is broken into steep 'wadys' or ravines, often feathered with a jungle of thorny acacia, from which rough forest, tower-like crags start up in wild confusion; inaccessible in many places save to the roe-deer and goats. Along the frontier-line looking south to Judah was the succession of hill-forts, Michmash, Bethel, Gibeah, Geba; and while these were held by the armed hosts, the oppressed inhabitants hid themselves and their portable property in the pits, holes, crevices with which the defiles and steeps were filled. And now v. 3 introduces us to the first exploit of a new character—with a name unsurpassed in Old Testament history for interest and beauty. Jonathan, the young prince, comes before us, type of unselfish generous friendship to all future generations. Through the silent interval of years the royal child has been slowly growing to his manhood's prime, strong as an eagle, swift as a roe; and now has become captain of a third part of the small but valiant host the king has been drawing around him, from the second year of his reign.

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* We state our own—not certainly as conclusive, but as that which seems best capable of proof from the events of the following chapters. Many would take a lower view of Saul's character.

† *Vide* the note, 'Speaker's Commentary.'

Jonathan begins his career by capturing Geba, whereupon the enraged Philistines retaliate by a furious raid (v. 5). Again there is probably a copyist's error in the numbers, especially of the chariots.† The terrified Benjamites fly to their 'holes in the rocks;'

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* A map is indispensable. Those in Stanley's Lectures, vol. ii. and 'Sinai and Palestine,' chap. iv. are excellent, as is also the topography of the country which was explored by Dean Stanley himself.

† More probably 300 than 30,000; the country for miles round is impracticable for horse or chariot warfare (*vide* 'Speaker's Commentary').

but the trumpet summons all who can help in the combat, and they follow Saul trembling. Verse 8 is remarkable. Evidently Samuel lends the aid of divine counsel, and Saul implicitly trusts him. A trial of faith exactly similar to that in x. 8 is set before the King—i.e. to 'tarry seven days' till the Prophet shall join him, for the offering of a solemn sacrifice. Observe this: vv. 9–13 record Saul's first great public and open failure. Yet how easy was self-deception! This was a fearful crisis. Before him the well-armed host 'gathering at Michmash;' behind him his affrighted, ill-prepared subjects melting away into the clefts and dens of the rock; and because Samuel is not come at the set time, the formalities of the sacrifice must be deferred; and the King's faith gives way, he cannot simply trust in the God that giveth victory in the day of battle. He puts weak superstitious trust in the externals of worship like that which lost Israel the battle of Aphek; and thus he flatly disobeys God's command given him through Samuel. How many a human career begun in zeal and faith, how many a character noble in outline, has been slowly deteriorated, brought to final ruin by such a process as this? Wilfulness at some critical point, desire to escape peril or difficulty in a self-chosen way, superstitious dependence even on means of grace, that can only be had by evading some plain and practical claim of duty. These were Saul's spiritual stumbling-blocks—have they never been ours? And there is another lesson which, if less obvious, still closely concerns us all—the conduct of the Benjamites. Israel had sought, in wilfulness, 'a king to lead us into battle,' and it was the royal tribe that now shrank from their leader, 'starting aside like a broken bow.' Had they, on this very ground, hallowed by Joshua's conquests, stood firmly to their duty, Saul's courage might have revived, he might have been saved this false and faithless step. Happy are those who have never by selfish cowardice made harder than needful the path of duty for another, have never by their own feebleness caused a brother to fall, it may be, fatally.

(v. 14.) Samuel's fearless words need no comment; we know he had come to love Saul, and to grieve over his shortcomings. Again, as in his early boyhood, the Prophet has to foretel the doom of a house, being probably scarcely aware as yet of the full force of the words put into his mouth. And now the host has dwindled to six hundred, while the enemies entrench themselves in Saul's former camp at Michmash, pouring down through the practicable passes, rugged as they are, Ophrah, Beth-horon, the valley of 'Zeboim' (hyenas). Michmash (hidden treasure) can be fairly identified. Two ravines would fit the description, but one of them, Wady Suweinit, is remarkable for the tumbled mass of rocky pinnacles and boulders at its mouth. Two of these crags, now worn and disintegrated by the storms of centuries, rise from the gorge, and must have once looked like giant teeth (chap. xiv. 5, margin)—Bozez (shining) and Seneh (thorn)—of the vivid and picturesque story. The wandering Arabs, with their strange Semitic conservatism, still call this place Muhkmas, though unable to account for the name. The camp being broken up, Saul, Samuel, and Jonathan repair to Gibeah of Benjamin, opposite the southern cliff or 'tooth,' and divided from the Philistines by a seemingly impassable rocky gulf.

There should be no break between xiii. 23 and xiv. 1, the sentence is carried straight on; 'Now' of our version is properly 'and.' The young prince plans his second and more brilliant exploit, he tells none but his faithful servant, he will not withdraw a single man from his father's slender force. We should note the position of the parties: Samuel is present at Gibeah, and likewise (v. 3) Ahiah, the son of Ahitub, the high priest, who has been summoned from the city of Nob, not far distant, to attend the King, performing probably religious rites for him and his court. Ahiah is the lineal descendant of Eli, representative of the house of Ithamar; his father, Ahitub, son of Phineas, with his brother, Ichabod, must have escaped as orphan children from the wreck of their home at Shiloh. Here, probably about half a century later, we have at another crucial point of Israel's national history a remarkable gathering of the representative men, each by his office foreshadowing the Messiah, as prophet, priest, and king, each in his way a 'Christos,' i.e. an anointed one, sent forth from God. Things seem at their worst when the Prince devises his second exploit, generously concealing it from his father, who would shrink from exposing him to such a risk. It is considered so impracticable to scale the cliffs, that the Philistines have taken no measures to secure themselves from sudden surprise. Jonathan perceives this, and, resolving not to weaken his father's slender force, he confides his scheme to his faithful armour-bearer only. Together they mount by a path only fit for the wild goat, and even when the garrison perceive the solitary figures they only suppose them to be fugitives, 'the Hebrews come out of the holes.' But, with all his fearlessness—there is a dash of boyish love of adventure about the whole attempt and its execution—Jonathan is neither reckless nor wilful; brave as Othniel and Gideon, we may believe him really visited by an inspiration from on high, in answer to the prayers of his nation sent up by Samuel and Ahiah. Yet he is ready to turn back, should God thus manifest His will according to the proposed test. And how beautifully is expressed the ground of his trust! what a contrast to the weak faith and wavering purpose of his father!—'it is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.' In the surprise of the first onset about a score of men are slain; v. 14 seems to be an incorrect rendering. Twenty men might easily be killed in a half acre, and evidently there is some cause for wonder. The Septuagint is probably the best reading, 'They slew twenty men with flints and stones of the field,' using the first missiles that came to hand; the Benjamites were noted slingers and marksmen; and, in the sudden confusion, not knowing the strength of the attacking party, the outposts easily succumbed to the blinding showers of flint-pebbles. And then v. 15 tells of the help God so often lent to His people through His own natural laws—the shock of earthquake, always an awe-striking sensation, but especially so at this time when 'the earth quaked at the presence of the God of Jacob.' To these Philistines the panic was overpowering, they mistake friend for foe and smite each other down. May there not have been among their aged warriors some who could recall the terror of the Mighty One before whose Ark their Dagon fell? Whom they had sought to propitiate by their offerings on the rock at Beth-shemesh? 'So it was a very great trembling.'

(vv. 16–18.) Jonathan's friends on the neighbouring height now become aware of something unusual going on—slaughter and hot pursuit; the garrison 'melting away.' Yet on calling the muster-roll, only the prince and his servant are missing. Saul bids Ahiah 'bring the ephod:' this being the Septuagint reading and the obviously correct one. The Ark never left Kirjath-jearim till David found it 'among the trees of the wood;' nor would the priest have been asked to bring it in this manner. Ahiah is to inquire by the ephod the will of God; but even as he does this, the King's impatience bursts all bounds. The increased noise and tumult show that a furious battle is begun in which he longs to join; so with irreverent haste he interrupts God's priest, and rushes with his host across the ravine to fall upon the retreating enemy, till they are driven past Beth-aven, westwards by the great rocky pass of Beth-horon, down the valley of Aijalon, back into their own land. Everywhere the Hebrews spring from their hiding-places to swell the now victorious army of Israel; and from Michmash to Aijalon the country is cleared of its oppressors (vv. 24–29). This, as we know, was an age of rash vows. Saul's needless restriction laid upon his army was both rash and cruel, impolitic and unfair. Jonathan, the leader of this glorious action, could not possibly know of it. As he himself says, on feeling his own jaded strength revived by the wild honey—there might have been a yet more signal victory, had the half-famished soldiers been allowed to share in the plenty found in the deserted garrison. As it is, we see the bad consequences of the hasty, wilful, ill-considered order, not only in the terrible predicament into which, like Jephthah, the father was brought, but in the sin of his people (vv. 32–35). How merciful were God's restrictions, His minute and detailed precepts to His chosen people, we learn from an occasion like this. How incapable of holy self-restraint, how ready to relapse at every turn into the most brutal and barbarous customs of heathendom, were the sons of Abraham, in spite of higher privileges! After building the altar, probably with a view to solemn sacrifices of thanksgiving,* Saul urges the renewal of the pursuit by night, and his soldiers seem inclined to please him. But Ahiah knows better, and suggests taking counsel first of God. Then in the silence of the Heavenly Oracle, the King is moved to the investigations which lead to the discovery that, by his own oath, he must slay the son who has delivered the country by his own valour. Notice here Saul's breaches of the Third Commandment—his frantic reiterations of God's Holy Name, as if he feared to trust his own resolution. There is a beginning of a better spirit in the people than when they looked upon the consummation of Jephthah's vow. They rescue the prince on the righteous ground that the deliverer shall not perish on the day of victory for breaking an injunction he had never received. The lesson for us clearly is, that Saul was led into this difficulty, to the brink of fearful crime, by his own lack of faith. Had he not stayed Ahiah's hand, had he taken counsel before hastily rushing into action, he would have gone calmly in the fear of the Lord to his work, without rash inflictions on himself and his followers. 'Prayer and provender hinder no man's way.' Prayer first, for light and guidance, then lawful care for the bodily powers needed in God's service, and then we may act, but not till then. How many noble aims have been missed and great works marred, by the sin of impatience! When we think of it as a little sin, let us remember it was the bane of Israel's first King.

(vv. 47 to end.). This is a kind of summary of Saul's reign glancing briefly on his wars and conquests, which are not given in detail. Only those points of his history are selected which mark the steps of his alienation from God, and the consequent choice of a new dynasty. Zobah is thought to be 'Sabe,' one of the Syrian provinces beyond Damascus, towards the Euphrates. It is often mentioned as troubling the northern frontier of Palestine, after separating itself into an independent kingdom.† The summary ends with an account of Saul's family; of his wife we know nothing but the name. The sons appear in 1 Chron. viii., though with variations. Those who can consult the genealogy as given by Dean Stanley (Lect. xxi.), will find excellent and striking remarks on the evident mingling of Jewish and heathen feeling in the names. 'Jonathan' is the 'gift of Jehovah;' 'Melchi-Shua,' the 'help of Moloch;' 'Ish-Baal' (or Ish-bosheth), the 'man of Baal;' 'Merib-baal' (a grandson), the 'soldier of Baal,' and so on. Among his kindred, another notable name is now mentioned—Abner, the son of Ner, his uncle, and faithful captain of the host. It must have been from this war of Michmash that Saul's military renown may be dated. His army from a small band develops into real strength; he is able to take the field in pitched battles, instead of merely attacking hill-posts. The beginning of this wider career he owes, therefore, to Jonathan.

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* Probably not his 'first altar,' considering how many years he had reigned. The Hebrew reading given in the margin seems better, 'that altar he began to build,' possibly his impatience left it half-finished.

† A map is quite necessary here.

Chap. xv. is perhaps as sad and full of awful warning as any in Holy Scripture. Its lack of chronology is striking and peculiar; we have no clue to the length of the interval between the occurrences of chaps. xiv. and xv. In the former, v. 48 leads us to conjecture that some terrible provocation had been given by Amalek, and this is not contradicted by Samuel's words. He is directed to assign as the reason for this war of extermination Amalek's conduct to Israel during the Exodus, which culminated in the battle of Rephidim. But a sustained effort to overthrow the growing power of the newly-established kingdom may well have been the filling up of Amalek's iniquity, and the end therefore of the dispensation of mercy which had endured so long towards them and other nations outside the Jewish covenant and yet of the children of Abraham.* Besides the Sinaitic district, the Amalekites held many strong posts in Central Palestine, especially Ephraim. It has been found impossible to distinguish precisely the route taken by Saul and his host. Some think 'from Shur to Havilah,' would lead him to the north-east; Shur being Asshur or Assyria. But the best view seems to point southwards, placing Shur near to Suez—so that he would pass by the rocky country where the wandering Kenites dwelt. Though 'cities' are mentioned, the word must be taken for 'stations.' Like the Huns and other Tartar races who invaded Europe, these tribes dwelt in circles, made of waggons turned into tents and strongly palisaded; here they stored the rich spoils carried off in predatory raids.

And now, Saul is commanded to go against this tribe, break up their encampments, and utterly destroy them. His host has gathered now to military strength, and to it he adds ten thousand of the tribe of Judah, the tribe probably worst distressed and wasted by these Desert robbers on their southern border. But with Saul's increased power, we mark his growing self-will and stubbornness. Conscience is actually asleep, as he disobeys the plain command of God, and involves in sin not himself only, but the thousands of God's people who follow him into the battle. It is a great national transgression, the sin of Achan and his house before Jericho aggravated twenty-fold. Next, we mark (v. 10) Samuel's conduct; on this, an occasion of that sorest grief 'fraternal spirits know.' Like many a 'Nabi,' in his previous warning to the king, he was scarcely conscious of the full meaning of the doom his lips had to speak; it bursts now upon the loyal, noble heart—he falls upon the earth, 'blank with the utter agony of prayer'—through that night he has a very Penuel of crying and wrestling with the Lord. Early in the morning he rises from the earth; the answer has come—in the calm, holy self-restraint with which he goes to meet Saul with the dread tidings (vv. 12–24). The awfulness of this whole passage should be reverently considered. First note the dialogue. Samuel does not reproach—he leaves the King to convict himself by his own mouth. After the self-justifying answers to the first questions—how sadly the gentle words fall! (v. 16)—the King is probably trying to pass on and evade further discourse. 'Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night.' We are let into the secret of the way our Father answers prayer. He may not give the thing sought for; but, He brings the reluctant will of His servants to acquiesce in His decrees. The measure of Saul's declension is marked (vv. 20, 21), 1st. by his obstinate persistence in self-justification: 2nd. in criminating 'the people'—was not their sin, his sin?—the worst feature of his own revolt from God, that His Israel should defile themselves under the orders of their King. Was it for this he had been 'anointed of the Lord'? 3rd. the gross irreverence of naming 'the Lord thy God,' as a *reason* or *excuse* for his flagrant disobedience (vv. 22, 23). The burning words of the Prophet's reply stand in their terrible clearness out from the sacred page for ever and ever, equally applicable in every dispensation, every stage of human development and civilization. On the rough brown hills of Palestine, beneath the stateliest Gothic fane man's head and hand ever wrought for God's worship, 'to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.' Verse 23 probably contains an allusion to the zeal displayed by Saul against the practice of sorcery. The unhappy King slowly awakes to the misery of his situation, but even here there is no true repentance; only remorse like that of Esau. He does not grieve for the sin, and its result, alienation from God—only for the loss of the Prophet's support, and his own standing in the sight of the elders of Israel. He clings in passionate supplication to Samuel's robe, but as it rends in his grasp, he is reminded of the folly of supposing that he can change the Unchangeable—'the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent.' * And yet, Samuel yields to his entreaty and turns back with him once more; he knows it is the last occasion of free intercourse between them (v. 32). One terrible duty remains, and that has been forced upon Samuel. The 'Agag' seems to have been the title of a chief among the Amalekites—like Sheik among Bedaweens, or Chagan in Tartary. Had Saul fulfilled the command given him, this man, distinguished for his savage cruelties, would have died a warrior's death in battle. He was probably spared in vainglorious desire to enhance the triumph; and now his execution must be carried out; no heathen ruler can be suffered to dwell in the house of the King of Israel. Agag's words seem to indicate a sense of his coming fate, and 'delicately' is rendered by the Septuagint 'trembling.' Samuel's answer reminds him of the just retribution of his sentence; and then, the Prophet and the King of Israel go their separate ways, each to his own house; parted, as far as their earthly intercourse is concerned, —to meet no more.

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* *Vide* 'Dictionary of the Bible,' AMALEK. This chief was grandson of Esau, and his descendants one of the mightiest nomadic tribes of the Sinaitic Peninsula. There was not merely ordinary hostility but the undying race-jealousy and strife of envious brethren in all these wars of Esau's sons against Jacob.

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* The only occasion on which this term is applied to Almighty God.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

Questions for February.

11. State the circumstances attending the restoration of the Ark.

12. Give the Hebrew idea of 'a Prophet,' and 'a prophecy.'

13. Write out (shortly, as you would the headings of a chapter) the sequence of events from 1 Sam. v.–xv. inclusive.

14. Note, shortly, where long intervals occur in the narrative, giving reasons for thinking so.

15. Mention the connection in which the following names occur—and write a brief note on any three: Ashdod; Mizpeh; Zelzah; Kirjath-jearim; Beth-Shemesh; Geba; Shur; Zeboim.

16. Describe Samuel's conduct on the proposed change of government.

17. Give Saul's tribe, and anything you can of his family.

18. Describe Jonathan's exploit at Michmash, and its results.

19. Note the stages of Saul's declension; and Samuel's rebukes to him.

20. Saul, Samuel and Ahiah were probably (from the context) together at Gibeah. What is there remarkable in that conjunction?

Answers to be sent, not later than March 2nd, to Miss L. Dundas, 37, Manor Place, Edinburgh. The name and address of the writer to be distinctly written *outside* the paper, to prevent difficulty in returning it. The questions can be answered from the Bible alone; but any one who can refer to Stanley's 'Lectures on the Jewish Church,' to his 'Sinai and Palestine,' to the 'Speaker's Commentary,' or even to a Paragraph Bible, will find any of these very helpful. A good map of Palestine is indispensable, and the Revised Version should be compared with the Authorised.

The Class List will be given in March.

FRENCH LITERATURE.

Marks for December.

Pertheiren	85	Les Verges	67
Hermione	85	Carlotta	45
L.	80	Iris	36
Feu Follet	75		

DEBATABLE GROUND.

CHELSEA CHINA finds that most of her correspondents, with the exception of *X. Y. Z.*, are of an adventurous disposition. Christmas has perhaps exhausted the energies of the less ardent spirits, so that they have not felt capable of venturing a paper.

Such papers as have come in, are spirited and to the point, and of manageable length. Chelsea China gives *Lucciola* and *Stanzerl* as on the side of daring, *X. Y. Z.* as putting the other side, *Double Daisy* as drawing some useful distinction; *Undine* states the problem. Chelsea China would like to add one further remark to her paper. Don't we, besides letting other people's birds fly, too frequently deluge with cold water those which keener, longer sights than our own see in the neighbouring bushes; and when our clever friends have caught and tamed them, do we always give their strange plumage and new notes the welcome they deserve?

Beta, *Semi-breve*, *Ein Mädchen* and *Bildad*, have all sent very well-written papers.

Chelsea China must apologise humbly to *E. E. K.* for having overlooked her paper on Stern Dealing, which would have added greatly to the interest of that debate.

Is 'Nothing venture, nothing have,' or, 'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,' the best motto?

'Which is the best motto *for me?*' depends very much on the answer to another question, 'Which is the hardest?' That will show on which side is the danger of excess, for the two ought to balance one another. But speaking generally, I should say the first is the best working motto. It means at least, effort, and if not visible progress, it may be the 'high failure' that overleaps the bounds of low success. On the other hand, the second motto *may* be used so as to encourage contentment with a very low standard, and also there is the possibility of thinking one has the bird fast, when really it has gone—since in things moral and intellectual there is no remaining stationary; if we are to hold fast that which we have, we must add to it. Also the first is least likely to be carried too far. Uninterrupted success is so rare that the adventurer is pretty sure to be taught caution whether he will or no. But the habit of doing nothing, for fear of losing, or doing wrong, grows only too fast; it is so fatally easy to excuse oneself from taking trouble, for fear of the risk.

STANZERL.

ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOR JANUARY.

Of these two mottoes, which is the best?—A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush—and, Nothing venture, nothing have. Which shall be our guide for this the opening year of the last decade of our century? There is wisdom in both; both need some attention. Without the first, life would be even more emphatically what Carlyle says it is at present: 'one unmitigated scramble after pigs'wash'—while without the second, it seems to me, life would lack what Kingsley calls the element of 'divine heroic discontent.' There would be no progress, no looking onward, worst of all, no faith. For surely faith is 'a venture' in itself. Of the two dangers—the centripetal one of settling down on one's lees, or the centrifugal one of never settling at all—I think I prefer encountering the second. True, the quiet and canny Scot says: 'better sit and rue than flit and rue;' but a firefly may be excused for a love of flitting, for in ceasing to flit it must cease to shine. One thing I have resolved upon, as 'Nothing venture, nothing have,' is to be my motto—I shall take special care never to 'venture' that which is not really mine. This resolution should keep one from doing much mischief in one's 'ventures,' for it seems to me some people have a wonderful knack of making sacrifices with what does not fairly belong to them—venturing gifts which are only in their hands on trust. The health or the fortune, the time or the talents, which they venture are often not theirs to give, having prior claims upon them, which cannot in justice be denied. With strict attention then to all such claims, I feel that I may indulge my 'heroic discontent,' especially as—to quote my Caledonian friends again (and they are not supposed to be rashly venturesome)—'Look to a gown of gold, and you're sure to get a sleeve of it.' Even though I may sometimes let a fair winged captive fly, in hopes of securing a still fairer couple, I think my motto shall be that of faith, Nothing venture, nothing have.

LUCCIOLA.

In one sense it is obvious that 'Nothing venture, nothing have' is the most suitable motto for those who own themselves called to 'deny themselves and take up their cross'—in its original meaning the profoundest and most daring venture possible. But, as usual with our Lord's words, He gives us two sides to the same paradox. He also warns us against 'gaining the whole world and losing our own soul;' and it not unfrequently happens that spiritual possessions are the bird in the hand imperilled by the spirit of adventure, if the object of the venture is not in itself spiritual. Take the excellent clergyman who brings a heavy debt upon his parish in order to provide it with a large and beautiful church. Do not we often find that the pressure of money needs detracts from the spiritual work done in the parish—that it weighs upon the mind of the man who with the best motives has incurred it, with the peculiar weight with which debt does afflict the mind of an honest man, and that the result is to produce undue attention to the 'serving of tables' in every form; while if he had been content either with a temporary church, or even with a mission-hall in which services were held, his mind would have been free for the spiritual needs of his parish? So with home peace, leisure for thought, etc. It is very possible to venture these for what seem more striking good works, and to bitterly repent their loss. Not that the venture may not be perfectly right and justifiable; but it should not be made without fairly contemplating the cost. M. B.

Does not this question depend chiefly on two things—what is the motive of the venture, and what is the alternative to success?

If, for example, a person is trying to attain greater perfection in character, or in the cultivation of some talent, 'high failure,' if it comes, is better than 'low success.' But if the object is to outstrip others, or to gain some selfish advantage, or if it is made from restlessness or impatience, the failure will not be noble, though it may be unwholesome.

Secondly, if the alternative to success is not only disappointment, but the shipwreck of something without which life itself is a failure, the case is different. Of course there are 'ventures of faith' which are justified by the cause, but there are also 'good gifts from above' which ought not to be imperilled for a doubtful gain, especially where others are involved. There are people who can carry through a difficult undertaking, who have genius and resource enough to avoid utter ruin, but there are many who cannot, and they had better accept the limitations of their character, and content themselves with unambitious efforts. In work for and with others, 'le meilleur' is not unfrequently 'l'ennemi du bien.' A small attainable good may be a vantage-ground for the future, always supposing that 'the bird in the hand' is a real, not merely an immediate gain.

DOUBLE DAISY.

Undine.—If your hat is already respectable, though dull, will you add that bow or feather, which *may* give it style, but which *may* turn out queer? If you are sure a brown dress won't look bad, will you get a red one, which *may* look better or *may* look worse? If you are a quiet and hitherto unknown individual, will you try to sing, recite, or act in public, when you *may* make a fool of yourself, or you *may* be praised as a genius? If you can make a few pounds by a nice little story suitable for the Sunday-school, will you spend your time in writing a psychological romance which *may* regenerate the world, or *may* be a *fiasco*? If you are pretty comfortable where you are, will you take that tour which *may* be such an eye-opener, or which *may* be so tiring and disagreeable? If your ideas are quite settled and satisfactory, will you entertain those new ones, which *may* enlarge the universe, or *may* darken your outlook for ever?

If you have several nice little round pearls all neatly set, will you part with them *all* for a big one which *may* be of great price, or *may* be—only a Roman one?

If you will—you *will*, and if you won't—you *won't!*

Chelsea China is very much obliged to all the contributors who have suggested subjects for discussion. Some are reserved for future opportunities, others have been discussed before in a slightly different form.

The question as to whether it is well to deceive others for their good, trenches too closely on the ground occupied by the long debate on Verbal Truthfulness. But, as regards the instance given, Chelsea China cannot think that between friends or lovers anything but absolute-truthfulness can ever really answer. Framley Parsonage is a study of the opposite line of conduct.

The Editor suggests for the February question an offshoot of a subject already discussed.

'Are bazaars and the entertainments belonging to them justifiable for strictly religious purposes?'

Answers to be sent to Chelsea China, care of the Publisher, by March 1st.

CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY.

The Conversion of England (*continued*).

Questions for February.

5. Give some account of the special work of Archbishop Theodore.

6. What were the proceedings of the Synods of 'Augustine's Oak,' Hertford, Hatfield, The Nidd? (average of ten lines each).

7. Name the founders, chief men and work, of the schools of Malmesbury, Jarrow, and York, with a detailed account of one.

8. Give a short account of any two of the following names: St. Hilda, St. Aidan, St. Chad, St. Guthlac, St. Cuthbert.

Answers to be sent to Bog-Oak, care of the Publishers, by March 1st.

November Class List.

First Class.

Kentigern	39	Sycorax	36	Decima	32
Etheldreda		Verena	35	Violets	
Cocksmoor	38	Malacoda		De Maura	
Water Wagtail	37	Speranza	34	Papaver	31
Polypodium		Λαμβδα		Erica	
Firenze		Bluebell	32	Charissa	30

Second Class.

Andromache	29	Ierne	28	Hispania	20
Vorwärts	28	Hegesippus	26	Gemma	
Fidelia		Καθολικος	25	Portia	
Veritas		Countess	24	Box	

Third Class.

Frideswide	19	Cecilia	18	Trudel	17
		Vivia			

REMARKS.

41. Best accounts of British Church from *Cocksmoor*, *Kentigern*, *Etheldreda*, *Sycorax*, *Verena*, *Malacoda*, *Trudel*, *Firenze*. Bog-Oak listens patiently when told British Bishops *may* have been at Nicæa (there is no evidence for any Western Bishop except Hosius of Cordova, and Nicasius of Die); but when *Decima*, *Hegesippus*, and others say they *were* there, she must protest and ask for authorities. Assertions—e.g. St. Athanasius' that such and such countries held the Nicene Faith, do not mean presence in the Council. The book *Clarissa* names in this connection is often inaccurate, especially where the glorification of the British Church is concerned. *Water Wagtail*, *Erica:* It seems there is no authority for British Bishops at Sardica. Its letter names Spanish and Gallican Bishops and omits British. They were among those who accepted the Sardican Faith. St. Hilary's letter to them was before Ariminum, and probably led to their attendance there. *Speranza* and others speak as if many British Bishops were at this latter Council, of whom three had their expenses paid. Bright, quoting 'Sulpicius Severus,' says three were present, *all* so poor as to accept the Emperor's bounty rather than burden 'other prelates' not necessarily compatriots. *Irene:* If Constantine summoned British Bishops, it was not because he was born here, he was grown up before his father came to Britain. *Polypodium:* St. Helena was not a Briton. *Countess:* St. Ninian received mission from Rome, not Britain, being consecrated and sent by Pope Siricius. Λαμβδα: As Pelagius was educated at Rome, Bog-Oak hardly thinks his heresy a sign of vigour in the British Church, even if a disease ever is! *Hispania:* The chief authorities are SS. Athanasius, Hilary, Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustine, who testify to the orthodoxy of Britain, its intercommunion with other churches, etc. Also Gildas who pictures its degradation before the Saxon Conquest. *Bluebell* should include the Gallican and probably the Galatian, among Keltic Churches. *Violets:* The Germans were Teutons, not Kelts.

42. The Conversion of Ireland exceedingly well done by *Cocksmoor*, *Kentigern*, *Etheldreda*, *Water Wagtail*, *Polypodium*, Λαμβδα. *Frideswide* gives an account of St. Patrick and his mission, with the actual conversion of Ireland omitted! *Vivia* and *Box:* The best authorities consider Celestine had nothing to do with St. Patrick's Mission. lius was not dead, but had withdrawn to Britain. All should

have named St. Bridget among Patrick's disciples, and St. Kieran, Piranus or Perran is pretty well known by his Church of Perranzabuloe on the Cornish Coast. He floated from Ireland on a millstone, converted the Cornish, and with his mother and chief friend was known to be buried under the altar of his church. When it was dug up, half a century ago, perfect all but the roof, three large skeletons, two male and one female, were found *in situ*. *Charissa, Decima:* St. Ninian, who died in the year Patrick's ministry probably began, was not his disciple. A member who shall be nameless, says St. Bridget founded monasteries for 'her own *sect*.'

43. Best answered by *Water Wagtail*, *Charissa*, and *Λαμβδα*. Very few give the whole characteristics of Keltic Mission work, some—but not all—of which were common also to early Teutonic missions. 1. In Maclear's words, 'One type distinguishes all. Hermits, devoted to celibacy, settle down in the wildest districts, convert, baptise, and found monastic schools on the largest scale.' We should observe then: α. The hermit life and work. β. The growth of the hermit's cells into enormous monasteries. γ. The Eastern nature of hermits and monks alike, St. Benedict's rule unknown to them; monasteries on the hermit principle were never near the haunts of men. Physical labour only when necessary. 2. The spirit of clanship recognised and utilised. α. The first attempt to convert being always addressed to the chief, the clan following. β. The clan spirit adopted in monasteries where the abbot had chieftain's rights. 3. Parochial system wholly unknown, episcopal *jurisdiction* nearly so; a bishop often an appendage to a monastery. 4. Schools always founded in monasteries and a native ministry trained. Perhaps *Portia* knows St. Kentigern best as St. Mungo.

44. Best accounts of the order of Iona by *Cocksmoor*, *Kentigern*, *Etheldreda*.

Papaver tells of the pilgrimages still made to St. Columba's reputed birthplace in County Donegal.

Though St. Columba's Order was not Benedictine, yet his rule as to work and study approximated to St. Benedict's, of which he may have heard through France and Ireland.

Andromache: If the answers are numbered like the questions, the latter need not be copied. *Vorwärts* asks for a book on this month's subject. '*Apostles of Mediæval Europe*,' 4*s*. 6*d*. (giving SS. Patrick and Columba), and the 'Celts' in the '*Conversion of the West*' Series, 2*s*., containing most of this month's subjects, have both been recommended already. Bog-Oak reciprocates the kind New Year wishes received from several members.

Subscriptions for 1890 received from *Cocksmoor*, *Kentigern*, Καθολικος, *Spider*, *March*, *Polypodium*, *Bluebell*, *Trudel*, *Vorwärts*, *Etheldreda*, and *Beryl*.

Notices to Correspondents.

THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

The Editor would be obliged for the addresses of the authors of 'Abigail' and of the 'Grey Woman.' The prize is divided between the authors of 'The Women's Rebellion' and of the 'Foretaste of the Well of St. Keyne.' The former has been criticised for making a Capuchin act as a parish priest. The author knows where such is the case in Italy.

In reply to *A. B. C.*, the 'Society of the Treasury of God' was formed in this country in 1885 for the purpose of banding together all who now practice the rule of setting apart a tenth of all income for pious or charitable uses, and of bringing the subject before church-people. Pamphlets and leaflets on the subject may be obtained of the Hon. Sec., Mr. S. E. Gunyon, 7, Ickburg Road, Upper Clapton, N.E. The Society at present consists of ninety-five members, of whom six are Bishops. S. E. GUNYON.

Little Ram Island is from an Irish air, ''Twas pretty to be in Ballinderry,' by the same author of 'Songs of Killarney.' It will be found on page 809 of the 19th vol. of 'Good Words.' The one for 1887.

The first verse is as follows—

'’Twas pretty to be in Ballinderry,
’Twas pretty to be in Aghalee;
’Twas prettier to be in little Ram's Island,
Trysting under the ivy tree!
Och Hone! ochone!
Och Hone! ochone!
For often I roved on little Ram's Island,
Side by side with Phelimy Hyland,
And still he'd court me, and I'd be coy,
Though at heart I loved him, my handsome boy.'

There are two more verses. E. C. D'ARLEY.

S. P. will be much obliged for any information about SS. Goven, Issel, and Florence, all of whom have churches or chapels dedicated to them in Pembrokeshire. Also, she will be glad to know the origin of the custom of 'New Year's Water' which prevails at Tenby, and which consists of a cup of water in which is stuck a sprig of holly, being carried by children, who sprinkle the passers-by and beg for pennies.

F. S. P.—The first is by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, sonnet on 'Futurity'—

'God keeps a niche
In Heaven to hold our idols! and albeit
He brake them to our faces, and denied
That our close kisses should impair their white—
I know we shall behold them raised complete—
The dust shook from their beauty—glorified,
New Memnons singing in the great God light.'

The other quotation—

'Hereafter, in a better world than this,
I shall desire more love and knowledge of you.'
As You Like It, i. 2

'To know the heart of all things was his duty,
All things did sing to him to make him wise,
And, with a sorrowful and conquering beauty,
The soul of all looked grandly from his eyes;
He gazed on all within him and without him,
He watched the flowing of Time's steady tide,
And shapes of glory floated all about him,
And whispered to him, and he prophesied.'

Where are these lines to be found, and who is the author of them?
G. P. B. E.

MADAM,

Some of your readers may be inclined to take part in an effort to raise a Memorial to one of the most devoted home missionaries of modern times, the late Mary Emily Simpson, authoress of 'Ploughing and Sowing' and 'Gleanings.' The late Bishop Wordsworth of Lincoln regarded these books, and the labours they describe, so highly, as to express the opinion, that the parishes (Boynton and Carnaby with Fraisthorpe) in which they were wrought, 'have been rendered memorable in the parochial annals of the Church of England by the work and writings of the authoress of "Ploughing and Sowing!"' It is proposed that the Memorial should take the form of the rebuilding of Fraisthorpe Chapel in her late father's parish, which was described in these terms, sixty years ago in a work on the Bridlington Priory Church, 'than which it is hardly possible to conceive more wretched buildings appropriated as places of public worship.' One of her sisters writes that it is 'a work my sister would have rejoiced in, and entirely approved of.' The Dean of St. Paul's writes, 'I quite agree that it is the best form of Memorial.' I should make too great a demand upon your space to describe Miss Simpson's devoted labours—walking by the side of the farm lads while ploughing, sitting on a bag of chaff to read to them in their dinner-hour, gathering them into classes for Sunday and week-day instruction, spending herself in efforts for their mental, moral, and spiritual good. She writes in 'Gleanings,' 'my own sisters do not half know what there is to contend with, nor the tears I often have to shed. For all that, it is a very happy way of life.' I may mention to those who do not know Miss Simpson's books, that a clergyman has promised £2 to the Fund, 'as expressive of my gratitude for having had my attention called to "Ploughing and Sowing!"' The Memorial has the approval of the Archbishop of the Diocese, and has already received the support of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, the Bishops of London, Lichfield, Salisbury, Hereford, and Nottingham; Bishop Hellmuth (our rural Dean); the Dean of St. Paul's, Chancellor Leeke, Prebendary, Stephens, etc., etc. The subscriptions paid and promised amount to £50 nearly, but a much larger sum will be required to render this Chapel seemly and decent for its sacred function, as a lasting memorial to Miss Simpson's work in the district. Those who wish to share in the task of raising a Memorial to what the great Bishop has described as 'memorable' work, may send their contributions, either to the Rev. H. Dacre Blanchard, Middleton-on-the-Wolds, Hull, or to myself at the subjoined address. C. IVENS,

Boynton Vicarage,
Bridlington.

The Monthly Packet.

4 MARCH, 1890.

TWO PENNILESS PRINCESSES.

CHAPTER III.

FALCON AND FETTERLOCK.

> 'Ours is the sky
> Where at what fowl we please our hawk shall fly.'—*T. Randolph.*

BEYOND York that species of convoy, which ranged between protection and supervision, entirely ceased; the Scottish party moved on their own way, through lanes and fields at times, but oftener through heath, rock, and moor, for England was not yet thickly inhabited, though there was no lack of hostels or of convents to receive them on this, the great road to the North, and to its many shrines for pilgrimage.

Perhaps Sir Patrick relaxed a little of his vigilance, since the good behaviour of his troop had won his confidence, and they were less likely to be regarded as invaders than by the inhabitants of the district nearer their own frontier.

Hawking and coursing within bounds had been permitted by both the Knight of Berwick and the Canon of Durham on the wide northern moors; but Sir Patrick, on starting in the morning of the day when they were entering Northamptonshire, had given a caution that sport was not free in the more frequented parts of England, and that hound must not be loosed, nor hawk flown without special permission from the lord of the manor.

He was, however, riding in the rear of the rest, up a narrow lane leading uphill, anxiously discussing with Father Romuald the expediency of seeking hospitality from any of the great lords whose castles might be within reach before he had full information of the present state of factions at the Court, when suddenly his son Malcolm came riding back, pushing up hastily.

'Sir! father!' he cried, 'there's wud wark ahead, there's a flight of [illegible]' big birds on before, and Lady Jean's hawk is awa' after them, and Jeanie's awa' after the hawk, and Geordie Red Peel is awa' after Jean, and Davie's awa' after Geordie;* and there's the blast of an English bugle, and my mither sent me for you to redd the fray!'

'Time, indeed!' said Sir Patrick, with a sigh, and, setting spurs to his horse, he soon was beyond the end of the lane, on an open heath, where some of his troop were drawn up round his banner, almost forcibly kept back by Dame Lilias and the elder Andrew. He could not stop for explanation from them, indeed his wife only waved him forward towards a confused group some hundred yards further off, where he could see a number of his own men, and too plainly, long bows and coats of Lincoln green, and he only hoped, as he galloped onward, that they belonged to outlaws and not to rangers. Too soon he saw that his hope was vain; there were ten or twelve stout archers with the white rosette of York in their bonnets, the falcon and fetterlock on their sleeves, and the Plantagenet quarterings on their breasts. In the midst was a dead bustard, also an Englishman sitting up, with his head bleeding; Jean was on foot, with her dagger-knife in one hand, and holding fast to her breast her beloved hawk, whose jesses were, however, grasped by one of the foresters. Geordie Red Peel stood with his sword at his feet, glaring angrily round, while Sir Patrick pausing, could hear his son David's voice in loud tones—

'I tell you this lady is a royal princess! Yes, she is'—as there was a kind of scoff—'and we are bound on a mission to your King from the King of Scots, and woe to him that touches a feather of ours.'

'That may be,' said the one who seemed chief among the English, 'but that gives no license to fly at the Duke's game, nor slay his foresters for doing their duty. If we let the lady go, hawk and man must have their necks wrung after forest laws.'

'And I tell thee,' cried Davie, 'that this is a noble gentleman of Scotland, and that we will fight for him to the death.'

'Let it alone, Davie,' said George. 'No scathe shall come to the lady through me.'

'Save him, Davie! save Skywing!' screamed Jean.

'To the rescue—a Drummond,' shouted David; but his father pushed his horse forward, just as the men in green were in the act of stringing, all at the same moment, their bows, as tall as themselves. They were not so many but that his escort might have overpowered them, but only with heavy loss, and the fact of such a fight would have been most disastrous.

'What means this, sirs?' he exclaimed, in a tone of authority, waving back his own men; and his dignified air, as well as the banner with which Andrew followed him, evidently took effect on the foresters, who perhaps had not believed the young men.

'Sir Patie, my hawk!' entreated Jean. 'She did but pounce on you unco' ugsome bird, and these bloodthirsty grasping loons would have wrung her neck.'

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* Please in the last number to change Archibald to George. He was a real personage, and his name was George.

'She took her knife to me,' growled the wounded man, who had risen to his feet, and showed bleeding fingers.

'Ay, for meddling with a royal falcon,' broke in Jean. ''Tis thou, false loon, whose craig should be raxed.'

Happily this was an unknown tongue to the foresters, and Sir Patrick gravely silenced her.

'Whist, lady, brawls consort not with your rank. Gang back doucely to my leddy.'

'But Skywing! he has her jesses,' said the girl, but in a lower tone, as though rebuked.

'Sir ranger,' said Sir Patrick courteously, 'I trust you will let the young demoiselle have her hawk. It was loosed in ignorance and heedlessness no doubt, but I trow it is the rule in England, as elsewhere, that ladies of the blood royal are not bound by forest laws.'

'Sir, if we had known,' said the ranger, who was evidently of gentle blood, as he took his foot off the jesses, and Jean now allowed David to remount her. 'But my Lord Duke is very heedful of his bustards, and when Roger there went to seize the bird, my young lady was over-ready with her knife.'

'Who would not be for thee, my bird,' murmured Jean.

'And yonder big fellow came plunging down and up with his sword—so as he was nigh on being the death of poor Roger again for doing his duty. If such be the ways of you Scots, sir, they be not English ways under my Lord Duke, that is to say, and if I let the lady and her hawk go, forest law must have its due on the young man there—I must have him up to Fotheringay to abide the Duke's pleasure.'

'Heed me not, Sir Patrick!' exclaimed Geordie. 'I would not have those of your meinée brought into jeopardy for my cause.'

David was plucking his father's mantle to suggest who George was, which in fact Sir Patrick might suspect enough to be conscious of the full awkwardness of the position, and to abandon the youth was impossible. Though it was not likely that the Duke of York would hang him if aware of his rank, he might be detained as a hostage or put to heavy ransom, or he might never be brought to the Duke's presence at all, but be put to death by some truculent underling, incredulous of a Scotsman's tale, if indeed he were not too proud to tell it. Anyway, Sir Patrick felt bound to stand by him.

'Good sir,' said he to the forester; 'will it content thee if we all go with thee to thy Duke? The two Scottish princesses are of his kin, and near of blood to King Henry, whom they are about to visit at Windsor. I am on a mission thither on affairs of state, but I shall be willing to make my excuses to him for any misdemeanour committed on his lands by my followers.'

The forester was consenting when George cried—

'I'll have no hindrance to your journey on my account, Sir Patrick.

'Foolish laddie,' said the knight. 'Father Romuald and I were only now conferring as to paying the Duke a visit on our way. Sir forester, we shall be beholden to you for guiding us.'

He further inquired into the ranger's hurts, and salved them with a piece of gold, while David thought proper to observe to George—

'So much for thy devoir to thy princess! It was for Skywing's craig she cared, never thine.'

George turned a deaf ear to the insinuation. He was allowed free hands and his own horse, which was perhaps well for the Englishmen, for Ringan Raefoot, running by his stirrup, showed him a long knife, and said with a grin—

'Ready for the first who daurs to lay hands on the Master! Gin I could have come up in time, the loon had never risen from the ground.'

George endeavoured in vain to represent how much worse this would have made their condition.

Sir Patrick, joining the ladies, informed them of the necessity of turning aside to Fotheringay, which he had done not very willingly, being ignorant of the character of the Duke of York, except as one of the war party against France and Scotland, whereas the Beauforts were for peace. As a vigorous governor of Normandy, he had not commended himself to one whose sympathies were French. Lady Drummond, however, remembered that his wife Cicely Nevil, the Rose of Raby, was younger sister to that Ralf Nevil who had married the friend of her youth, Alice Montagu, now Countess of Salisbury in her own right.

Sir Patrick did not let Jean escape a rebuke.

'So, lady, you see what perils to brave men you maids can cause by a little heedlessness.'

'I never asked Geordie to put his finger in,' returned Jean, saucily. 'I could have brought off Skywing for myself without such a clamjamfrie after me.'

But Eleanor and Annis agreed that it was as good as a ballad, and ought to be sung in one, only Jean would have to figure as the 'dour lassie.' For she continued to aver, by turns, that Geordie need never have meddled, and that of course it was his bounden duty to stand by his King's sister, and that she owed him no thanks. If he were hanged for it, he had run his craig into the noose.

So she tossed her proud head, and toyed with her falcon, as all rode on their way to Fotheringay, with Geordie in the midst of the rangers.

It was so many years since there had been serious war in England, that the castles of the interior were far less of fortresses than of magnificent abodes for the baronage, who had just then attained their fullest splendour. It may be observed that the Wars of the Roses were for the most part fought out in battles, not by sieges. Thus Fotheringay had spread out into a huge pile, which crowned the hill above, with a strong inner court, and lofty donjon tower indeed, and with mighty walls, but with buildings for retainers all round, reaching down to the beautiful newly-built octagon-towered church; and with a great park stretching for miles, for all kinds of sport.

'All this enclosed! Yet they make sic a wark about their bustards, as the' ca' them,' muttered Jean.

The forester had sent a messenger forward to inform the Duke of York of his capture. The consequence was that the cavalcade had no sooner crossed the first drawbridge under the great gateway of the castle, where the banner of Plantagenet was displayed, than before it were seen a goodly company, in the glittering and gorgeous robes of the fifteenth century.

There was no doubt of welcome. Foremost was a graceful, slenderly-made gentleman of about thirty years old, in rich azure and gold, who doffed his cap of maintenance, turned up with fur, and with long ends, and, bowing low, declared himself delighted that the princesses of Scotland, his good cousins, should honour his poor dwelling.

He gave his hand to assist Jean to alight, and an equally gorgeous but much younger gentleman in the same manner waited on Eleanor. A tall, grizzled, sunburnt figure received Lady Drummond with recognition on both sides, and the words 'My wife is fain to see you, my honoured lady; is this your daughter?' with a sign to a tall youth, who took Annis from her horse. Dame Lilias understood with joy that the Countess of Salisbury was actually in the castle, and in a few moments more she was in the great hall, in the arms of the sweet Countess Alice of her youth, who, middle-aged as she was, with all her youthful impulsiveness had not waited for the grand and formal greeting bestowed on the princesses by her stately young sister-in-law, the Duchess of York.

There seemed to be a perfect crowd of richly-dressed nobles, ladies, children; and though the Lady Joanna held her head up in full state, and kept her eye on her sister to make her do the same, their bewilderment was great; and when they had been conducted to a splendid chamber, within that allotted to the Drummond ladies, tapestry-hung, and with silver toilette apparatus, to prepare for supper, Jean dropped upon a high-backed chair, and insisted that Dame Lilias should explain to her exactly who each one was.

'That slight, dark-eyed carle who took me off my horse was the Duke of York, of course,' said she. 'My certie, a bonnie Scot would make short work of him, bones and all! And it would scarce be worth while to give a clout to the sickly lad that took Elleen down.'

'Hush, Jean,' said Eleanor; 'someone called him King! Was he King Harry himself?'

'Oh, no,' said Dame Lilias, smiling; 'only King Harry of the Isle of Wight—a bit place about the bigness of Arran; but it pleased the

English King to crown him and give him a ring, and give him the realm in a kind of sport. He is, in sooth, Harry Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, and was bred up as the King's chief comrade and playfellow.'

'And what brings him here?'.

'So far as I can yet understand, the family and kin have gathered for the marriage of his sister, the Lady Anne—the red-cheeked maiden in the rose-coloured kirtle—to the young Sir Richard Nevil, the same who gave his hand to thee, Annis—the son of my Lord of Salisbury.'

'That was the old knight who led thee in, mother,' said Annis. 'Did you say he was brother to the Duchess?'

'Even so. There were fifteen or twenty Nevils of Raby—he was one of the eldest, she one of the youngest. Their mother was a Beaufort, aunt to yours.'

'Oh, I shall never unravel them!' exclaimed Eleanor, spreading out her hands in bewilderment.

Lady Drummond laughed, having come to the time of life when ladies enjoy genealogies.

'It will be enough,' she said, 'to remember that almost all are, like yourselves, grandchildren or great-grandchildren to King Edward of Windsor.'

Jean, however, wanted to know which were nearest to herself, and which were noblest. The first question Lady Drummond said she could hardly answer; perhaps the Earl of Salisbury and the Duchess, but the Duke was certainly noblest by birth, having a double descent from King Edward, and in the male line.

'Was not his father put to death by this King's father?' asked Eleanor.

'Aye, the Earl of Cambridge, for a foul plot. I have heard my Lord of Salisbury speak of it; but this young man was of tender years, and King Harry of Monmouth did not bear malice, but let him succeed to the dukedom when his uncle was killed in the Battle of Agincourt.'

'They have not spirit here to keep up a feud,' said Jean.

'My good brother—aye, and your father, Jeanie—were wont to say they were too Christian to hand on a feud,' observed Dame Lilias, at which Jean tossed her head, and said—

'That may suit such a carpet-knight as yonder Duke. He is not so tall as Elleen there, nor as his own duchess.'

'I do not like the duchess,' said Annis; 'she looks as if she scorned the very ground she walks on.'

'She is wondrous bonnie, though,' said Eleanor; 'and so was the bairnie by her side.'

In some degree Jean changed her opinion of the Duke, in consequence, perhaps, of the very marked attention that he showed her when the supper was spread. She had never been so made to feel what it was to be at once a king's daughter and a beauty; and at the most magnificent banquet she had ever known.

Durham had afforded a great advance on Scottish festivities; but in the absence of its Prince Bishop, another Nevil, it had lacked much of what was to be found at Fotheringay, in the full blossoming of the splendours of the princely nobility of England, just ere the decimation that they were to perpetrate on one another.

The hall itself was vast, and newly finished in the rich culmination of Gothic work, with a fan tracery, vaulted roof, a triumph of architecture, each stalactite glowing with a shield or a badge of England, France, Mortimer and Nevil—lion or lily, falcon and fetterlock, white rose, and dun cow, all and many others—likewise shining in the stained glass of the great windows.

The high table was loaded with gold and silver plate, and Venice glasses even more precious; there were carpets under the feet of the nobler guests, and even the second and third tables were spread with more richness and refinement than ever the sisters of James II. had known in their native land. In a gallery above, the Duke's musicians and the choristers of his chapel were ready to enliven the meal; and as the chief guest, the Lady Joanna of Scotland was handed to her place by the Duke of York, who, as she now perceived, though small in stature, was eminently handsome and graceful, and conversed with her, not as a mere child, but as a fair lady of full years.

Eleanor, who sat on his other hand beside the Earl of Salisbury, was rather provoked with her sister for never asking after the fate of her champion; but was reassured by seeing his red head towering among the numerous squires and other retainers of the second rank. It certainly was not his proper place, but it was plain that he was not in disgrace; and in fact the whole affair had been treated as a mere pardonable blunder of the rangers. The superior one was sitting next to the young Scot, making good cheer with him. Grand as the whole seemed to the travellers, it was not an exceptional banquet; indeed, the Duchess apologized for its simplicity, since she had been taken at unawares, evidently considering it as the ordinary family meal. There was ample provision, served up in by no means an unrefined manner, even to the multitudinous servants and retainers of the various trains; and beyond, on the steps and in the court, were a swarm of pilgrims, friars, poor, and beggars of all kinds, waiting for the fragments.

It was a wet evening, and when the tables were drawn, the guests devoted themselves to various amusements. Lord Salisbury challenged Sir Patrick to a game at chess, Lady Salisbury and Dame Lilias wished for nothing better than to converse over old times at Middleham Castle; but the younger people began with dancing, the Duke, who was only thirty years old, leading out the elder Scottish princess, and the young King of the Isle of Wight, the stately and beautiful Duchess Cicely. Eleanor, who knew she did not excel in anything that required grace, and was, besides, a good deal fatigued, would fain have excused herself, when paired with the young Richard Nevil; but there was a masterful look about him that somewhat daunted her, and she obeyed his summons, though without acquitting herself with anything approaching to the dexterity of her sister, who, with quite as little practice as herself, danced well—by quickness of eye and foot, and that natural elegance of movement which belongs to symmetry.

The dance was a wreathing in and out of the couples, including all of rank to dance together, and growing more and more animated, till excitement took the place of weariness; and Eleanor's pale cheeks were flushed, her eyes glowing, when the Duchess's signal closed the dance.

Music was then called for, and several of the princely company sang to the lute; Jean, pleased to show there was something in which her sister excelled, and gratified at some recollections that floated up of her father's skill in minstrelsy, insisted on sending for Eleanor's harp.

'Oh, Jean, not now; I canna,' murmured Eleanor, who had been sitting with fixed eyes, as though in a dream.

But the Duke and other nobles came and pressed her, and Jean whispered to her not to show herself a fule bodie, and disgrace herself before the English, setting the harp before her and attending to the strings. Eleanor's fingers then played over them in a dreamy, fitful way that made the old Earl raise his head and say—

'That twang carries me back to King Harry's tent, and the good old time when an Englishman's sword was respected.'

''Tis the very harp,' said Sir Patrick; 'aye, and the very tune——'

'Come, Elleen, begin. What gars thee loiter in that doited way?' insisted Jean. 'Come, "Up atween."'

And, led by her sister in spite of herself, almost, as it were, without volition, Eleanor's sweet pathetic voice sang—

'Up atween yon twa hill-sides, lass,
  Where I and my true love wont to be,
A' the warld shall never ken, lass,
  What my true love said to me.

Owre muckle blinking blindeth the ee, lass,
  Owre muckle thinking changeth the mind,
Sair is the life I've led for thee, lass,
  Farewell warld, for it's a' at an end.'

Her voice had been giving way through the last verse, and in the final line, with a helpless wail of the harp, she hid her face, and sank back with a strange choked agony.

'Why, Elleen! Elleen, how now?' cried Jean. 'Cousin Lilias, come!'

Lady Drummond was already at her side, and the Duchess and Lady Salisbury proffering essences and cordials, the gentlemen offering support; but in a moment or two Eleanor recovered enough to cling to Lady Drummond, muttering—

'Oh, take me awa', take me awa'?'

And hushing the scolding which Jean was commencing by way of bracing, and rejecting all the kind offers of service, Dame Lilias led the girl away, leaving Jean to make excuses and explanations about her sister being but 'silly' since they had lost their mother, and the tune minding her of home, and of her father.

When, with only Annis following, the chambers had been reached, Eleanor let herself sink on a cushion, hiding her face against her friend, and sobbing hysterically—

'Oh, take me awa'! Take me awa'! It's all blood and horror!'

'My bairnie, my dearie! You are over-weary—'tis but a dreamy fancy. Look up! All is safe; none can harm you here.'

With soothings, and with some of the wine on the table, Lady Drummond succeeded in calming the girl, and, with Annis's assistance, she undressed her and placed her in the bed,

'Oh, do not gang! Leave me not,' she entreated. And as the lady sat by her, holding her hand, she spoke, 'It was all dim before me, as the music played, and——'

'Thou wast sair forefaughten, dearie.'

Eleanor went on.

'And then, as I touched mine harp, all, all seemed to swim in a mist of blood and horror. There was the old Earl and the young bridegroom, and many and many more of them, with gaping wounds and deathly faces—all but the young King of the Isle of Wight and his shroud, his shroud, Cousin Lily, it was up to his breast; and the ladies' faces that were so blithe, they were all weeping, ghastly, and writhen; and they were whirling round a great sea of blood right in the middle of the hall, and I could—I could bear it no longer.'

Lady Drummond controlled herself, and for the sake both of the sobbing princess and of her own shuddering daughter said that this terrible vision came of the fatigue of the day, and the exhaustion and excitement that had followed. She also knew that, on poor Eleanor, that fearful Fastern's Eve had left an indelible impression, recurring in any state of weakness or fever. She scarcely marvelled at the strange and frightful fancies, except that she believed enough in second-sight to be concerned at the mention of the shroud enfolding the young Beauchamp who bore the fanciful title of the King of the Isle of Wight.

For the present, however, she applied herself to the comforting of Eleanor with tender words and murmured prayers, and never left her till she had slept and wakened again, her entire self, upon Jean coming up to bed at nine o'clock—a very late hour—escorted by sundry of the ladies to inquire for the patient.

Jean was still excited, but she was, with all her faults, very fond of her sister, and obeyed Lady Drummond in being as quiet as possible.

She seemed to take it as a matter of course that Elleen should have her strange whims.

'Mother used to beat her for them,' she said, 'but Nurse Annaple said that made her worse, and we kept them secret as much as we could. To think of her having them before all that English folk! But she will be all right the morn.'

This proved true; after the night's rest, Eleanor rose in the morning as if nothing had disturbed her, and met her hosts as if no visions had hung around them. It was well, for Sir Patrick had accepted the invitation courteously given by the Duke of York to join the great cavalcade, with which he, with his brothers-in-law, the Earl of Salisbury, and Bishop of Durham, and the Earl of Warwick, alias the King of the Isle of Wight, were on their way to the Parliament that was summoned anent the King's marriage. The unwilling knights of the shire, and burgesses of Northampton who would have to assist in the money grant had asked his protection; and all were to start early on the Monday—for Sunday was carefully observed as a holiday, and the whole party in all their splendours attended high mass in the beautiful church.

After time had been given for the ensuing meal, all the yeomen and young men of the neighbourhood came up to the great outer court of the castle, where there was ample space for sports and military exercises, shooting with the long and cross-bow, riding at the quintain and the like, in competitions with the grooms and men-at-arms attached to the retinue of the various great men; and the wives, daughters and sweethearts came up to watch them. There were prizes for the most successful, of leathern coats, bows, knives, and the like, and refreshments of barley-bread, beef and very small beer served round with a liberal hand, by the troops of servants bearing the falcon and fetterlock badge, and all was done not merely in sport but very much in earnest, in the hope on the part of of the Duke, and all who were esteemed patriotic, that these youths might serve in retaining at least, if not in recovering, the English conquests.

Those of gentle blood abstained from their warlike exercises on this day of the week, but they looked on from the broad walk in the thickness of the massive walls; the Duke with his two beautiful little boys by his side, the young Earls of March and Rutland, handsome fair children, in whom the hereditary blue eyes and fair complexion of the Plantagenets recurred, and who bade fair to surpass their father in stature. Their mother was by right and custom to distribute the prizes, but she always disliked doing so, and either excused herself, or reached them out with the ungracious demeanour that had won for her the muttered name of "Proud Cis." On this day she had avoided the task on the plea of the occupations caused by her approaching journey, and the Duke put in her place his elder boy, and his little cousin, Lady Anne Beauchamp, the child of the young King of the Isle of Wight—a short-lived little delicate being, but very fair and pretty, so that the two children together upon a stone chair, cushioned with red velvet, were like a fairy king and queen, and there was many a murmur of admiration, and 'Bless their little hearts' or 'their sweet faces,' as Anne's dainty fingers handled the prizes, big bows, or knives, arrows or belts, and Edward had a smile and appropriate speech for each, such as 'Shoot at a Frenchman's breast, next time, Bob,' 'There's a knife to cut up the deer with, Will,' and the like amenities, at which his father nodded, well pleased to see the arts of popularity coming to him by nature. Sir Patrick watched with grave eyes, as he thought of his beloved sovereign's desire to see his people thus practised in arms without peril of feud and violence to one another.

Jean looked on, eager to see some of the Scots of their own escort excel the English pock-puddings, but though Dandie and two or three more contended, the habits were too unfamiliar for them to win any great distinction, and George Douglas did not come forward; the competition was not for men of gentle blood, and success would have brought him forward in a manner it was desirable to avoid. There was a good deal of merry talk between Jean and the hosts, enemies though she regarded them. The Duke of York was evidently much struck with her beauty and liveliness, and he asked Sir Patrick in private whether there were any betrothal or contract in consequence of which he was taking her to France.

'None,' said Sir Patrick, 'it is merely to be with her sister, the Dauphiness.'

'Then,' said young Richard Nevil, who was standing by him, and seemed to have instigated the question, 'there would be no hindrance supposing she struck the King's fancy.'

'The King is contracted,' said Sir Patrick.

'Half contracted! but to the beggarly daughter of a Frenchman who calls himself king of half-a-dozen realms without an acre in any of them. It is not gone so far but that it might be thrown over if he had sense and spirit not to be led by the nose by the Cardinal and Suffolk.'

'Hush—hush, Dick! this is dangerous matter,' said the Duke, and Sir Patrick added—

'These ladies are nieces to the Cardinal.'

'That is well, and it would win the more readily consent—even though Suffolk and his shameful peace were thrown over,' eagerly said the future King maker.

'Gloucester would be willing,' added the Duke. 'He loved the damsel's father, and hateth the French alliance.'

'I spoke with her,' added Nevil, 'and red-hot little Scot as she is, she only lacks an English wedlock to make her as truly English, which this wench of Anjou can never be.'

'She would give our meek King just the spring and force he needs,' said the Duke; 'but thou wilt hold thy peace, Sir Knight, and let no whisper reach the women-folk.'

This Sir Patrick readily promised. He was considerably tickled by the idea of negociating such an important affair for his young King and his protégée, feeling that the benefit to Scotland might outweigh any qualms as to the disappointment to the French allies. Besides, if King Henry of Windsor should think proper to fall in love with her, he could not help it; he had not brought her away from home or to England with any such purpose; he had only to stand by and let things take their course, so long as the safety and honour of her, her brother and the kingdom were secure. So reasoned the canny Scot, but he held his tongue to his Lilias.

(*To be continued.*)

GRANNY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'RUTH HALLIDAY.'

PART I.

It was Christmas Eve, and all was covered with snow. Granny and I sat by the fireside as we had sat so often; but now, alas, never shall again! How well I remember the old parlour, with its low ceiling and dark oak-panelled walls, with the china on oak brackets here and there, and the thick mullioned windows making a deep recess; for the window made such a good place to sit and chat in in the winter, and still better in the summer, when through the old-fashioned diamond-paned casement came the many sweet scents from the garden.

Then the fire-place!—a large open one, with real iron dogs, and great logs of wood, and such nice fireside corners. How the firelight used to play on the dark walls, and on the pictures—these were mostly family portraits, pale ladies in very short-waisted dresses, and their hair done in elaborate fashions, and one pretty boy, with fair golden hair, dressed in blue velvet. He was some far-off ancestor, and I have often tried to trace a likeness to one of our boys in that beautiful child's face; but Harry never had such good features, and his hair was a real red, not golden, like the boy in the picture, and Dick was too dark, and John's hair could never have had any curl in it, so I could only hope great things for baby, who was, at present, the beauty of the family.

Now I hope you can imagine what our dear old parlour was like, and I must try and describe Granny. But no description will ever make you understand what a very dear old lady she was—my *dearest* friend, I had almost called her; but perhaps she was not quite that, though very nearly so. I had a good and loving father and mother, and yet, much and dearly as I loved them both, I used to think that in some ways Granny understood me and my difficulties better than they did. She seemed in some way like one who, being a little way above the battle-field of life, could see more clearly than those who were face to face, so to say, with the everyday difficulties.

As to personal appearance, Granny was slight and thin; her hair quite white; her profile well cut; her face would have been peaceful had it not been for a wistful look in her eyes, and a habit she had of always looking eagerly towards the door, even when no one was coming in or out. We had all noticed this habit of Granny's, and the children had wondered what she was expecting: and, as their minds were now all set upon Christmas presents, they settled that Granny was expecting some very beautiful present.

Many times that day had one or other of the children run into the parlour and poured into Granny's ever-ready ear the great secret about their father's or mother's present. But now all was quiet, for except the very little ones everyone was at a party.

I had been asked, and, oh! why wasn't I there? I looked into the fire, and thought, and dreamt. I was not often idle, but this evening we had not lit the lamp, and, while Granny dozed, I sat and thought, and sadly wondered if *he* would be at the party—if I was right to stay at home. Mother had been pleased, and had kissed me; but then she could not tell what I felt. At last a bit of wood fell in the fire, and Granny woke with a start.

'Oh, my dear, what poor company I am for you!' she said.

'No, no, Granny dear,' I said, stirring up the fire; 'you're the very best company possible, you and the fire. I'm not up to much fun to-night—perhaps never shall be again;' and I gave a little self-pitying cough.

'Oh, child, child,' said Granny, 'don't say that—don't think that. Life has so much joy in it for such as you. Yes, yes,' she continued, as I shook my head, 'I know what it is; you don't see your way plain yet, and you are all bewildered, dear; but light will come. You have your duty, anyhow; just you stick to that one little bit of light, and He will make it all right in His own good time.'

'I suppose,' I said sadly, 'my little bit of light now is mother's wish; but ah, Granny! if Alan should think I hold myself too high and don't think him good enough! Of course I know he is not so good as he ought to be, but it isn't for me to leave him to himself and let him get worse and worse, and think me a wretched, self-righteous Pharisee. Perhaps his love for me is just the one little bright light to help him; and you know fathers and mothers are worldly some time, and lovers are broken-hearted, and lives are ruined.'

'Yes, yes,' Granny said, nodding her head as if she were beating time to a song I was singing. 'Such things do happen, but not very often; and worldly parents would not think so much as some friends do of unsteadiness. No, no; believe me, dearie, true love, real love, is like good metal—all the better for the furnace; all the dross is burnt away, and the metal rings pure and true, and lasts and lasts for ever. But there's a great deal of dross in most love, a great deal of selfishness and vanity to be scrubbed off before we see the real gold.'

Granny left off speaking and we both sat as before, gazing into the fire. I knew Granny was right—in theory, at any rate—but then Alan was my first love. I was sorry other people did not think much of him; but he seemed even so more entirely my own, and I felt how I could defend him and stand up for him, as I had often done for a brother in disgrace with the authorities. My mother did not approve of him, and as he had at present no means of maintaining a wife, both she and my father were displeased at his having told me of his love, and they would not hear of any engagement. He was likely to be at this party; my mother had not suggested my staying at home, but she was pleased with me for offering to stay with Granny, and tears were in her eyes as she kissed me before she went. Though I pitied myself, and thought sadly of Alan wanting me and missing me, I sometimes wondered whether I really loved Alan, or if I was like an obstinate child, and would not give him up because there were difficulties in the way. I was always obstinate as a child, and always valued a treat or a privilege more if there had been some obstacle and some hindrance from the authorities to be overcome.

Just then the door gave a little creak, and Granny looked up so eagerly that I laughed and said—

'Granny, I do believe Harry is right, and you do expect to see Santa Claus to-night.'

'Did the boy say that?' said Granny, smiling. 'I wonder what put that into his head.'

'Why, Granny,' I said, 'you know you do often look as if you expected some one, and you always kept your eye on the door.'

'Do I, dear? It's a way I got into some forty years ago, expecting something I never got—no, never, and never shall now. But,' she added more cheerfully, 'I've been happy, though I've been a widow for forty years; but I've been much blest. Oh yes, I did try for the bit of light, and, child, believe me, I have suffered; and yet, in spite of all the sharp suffering I went through, I would do it again, I hope. And why should I complain like a spoilt child because my good Father denies me what I had set my heart on? Nay, I wouldn't have been without the chastening.'

Granny stopped speaking, and looked wistfully into the fire.

'Was it grandfather's death?' I asked shyly, for I knew that he had died at sea, and that Granny had great difficulty in believing that he was really dead, and dwelt upon all the tales of the reappearance of shipwrecked people.

'Yes, partly,' said Granny; 'but only partly, for he was a good man, and God took him; but oh, my dear, we parted coldly, and he promised me faithfully he would write, and he never did. Remember, dear, we had not quarrelled—oh no, we never had a quarrel, thank God; he was the best and tenderest husband ever woman had, but he thought I had mistaken my duty. I thought, as his father and mother had asked me to stay with them, I ought to do it; he thought not. You know they had not quite liked our marriage—thought their son might have looked higher, and John fancied I had been slighted. But though I had felt them cold at first, we had got on much better lately, and they were very kind to my baby boy—and very proud of him too. I meant to decide aright, and I prayed for a "right judgment in all things." And John gave in, and said I might do as I liked about it; but my persistency had annoyed him, and made him less loving. Just at last he ran back for one more kiss, and promised me he would send me a letter from Cork When the news came of the loss of his ship I was very ill—I seemed hardly able to understand what had happened. His mother nursed me and tended me most devotedly, and, in the utter prostration of bodily strength which overwhelmed me, I clung to her and loved her like a real mother. I was an orphan and very forlorn, so John's people were indeed my people. At last I got better, and began to notice my baby again; but I seemed as if all I really lived for was for news. Shipwrecked sailors had so often been picked up by outward-bound vessels, and been months before they could communicate with their friends, that John might some day walk in; and letters were so often delayed—the vessel had stopped at Cork, and there had been letters left there, so I thought it not unreasonable to expect mine; but I never got it. There, dear child, you must be tired of an old woman's story; and yet I am not sorry I did what I could not help thinking was right. John's parents were both nursed by me, both loved me and blessed me before they died, and your good father was loved by them as well as by his mother.'

Here I noticed that Granny was very tired, and suggested bed. She agreed, only making me read her one chapter of the Bible and her usual prayers; and as I read the evening-prayer, 'Lighten our darkness,' I thought of my own difficulties, and hoped that I should be able to follow Granny's advice, and follow my one little bit of light. I lay down to sleep that night with a lighter heart than usual, and a determination to keep to what I knew was right. Had it not been for this happy ending of Christmas Eve, I doubt if I should have had so happy a Christmas Day as I had, or been able to enter so heartily into the service, to which even Granny managed to come. I have never seen anything more like heavenly joy than was on Granny's face when the *Gloria in Excelsis* was sung in church after the Holy Communion had been administered. Surely to her it was a foretaste of eternal joys which she was so soon to enter upon, for this was the last time Granny ever left the house till she was carried to the churchyard.

One day in Christmas week my father handed Granny a large blue envelope from the Post-Office.

'Why, what can the Postmaster have sent Granny?' cried Harry.

Oh, what indeed! thought my father, when he noticed how white Granny had become, and how she trembled.

'What is it, mother dear?' he said, going close to her.

For answer she leant on his shoulder and burst into tears.

'Oh, John, John, my boy, it has come at last. Oh, my dear man——'

What the *it* was which so excited Granny puzzled the children.

All that could be seen was a curious blue folded paper directed to Granny, and written on it, "One shilling to pay." Not a bit like a letter, as the children had said; and how curious it was not to be put in an envelope, and not to have any stamps on it.

After a time Granny grew more calm, and let us all see the outside of the folded paper and notice the curious marks on it, and she told us the letter was forty years old, and that forty years ago there were no penny stamps; and then she made father read the letter from the Postmaster-General, saying, that during the alterations in the Post-Office buildings this letter had been found,[*] and as the direction on it was quite plain, he had forwarded it, and hoped that the person to whom it was addressed was still alive. No wonder Granny was tired out by such excitement, and glad to go to bed; nor did she ever get up again, though seeming in no pain or discomfort; this letter had been her *Nunc Dimittis*, and she gently sank to sleep peacefully, happily, her last words being, 'My God, I thank Thee.'

PART II.

MANY years have passed since I wrote the above, and it is Christmas Eve again, and as I sit in silence by the fire, my thoughts go back to that Christmas Eve long ago when Granny and I spent a quiet evening together.

My surroundings are very different from what they were on that night, for I am sitting on a low wicker chair in a tiny modern sitting-room in a small house in a street. Outside I hear the tramp of busy people and snatches of street-songs; inside, the little room all speaks of comfort, the pictures, the book-cases, the small knick-nacks; and there is that unspeakable air of grace and refinement about everything which some women know so well how to give to a room, even to a room like this, which is so prosaically square with no odd corners. Maybe, none of the odds-and-ends in the room are of much intrinsic value, but the happy owner has had great pleasure in making all her treasures—presents it may be—look their very best. In short, I quite agree with Harry that there is no one like his Jeannie for making a room look liveable.

How glad I was that I was at liberty to go at once to Harry when his wife was so ill, and when he feared that my little godson might soon be motherless. Dear boy, how he welcomed me as if he felt that my very presence brought him strength! and as to my dear little sister Jeannie, who was so eager and anxious that she could not rest, and was thus risking her chance of recovery, I never felt so glad that
was to her what my brothers often called me, 'a feather-bed sor
person.' For, excited as the little woman was, she soon

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[*] A letter was found when the Post-Office buildings were altered
ago forty years old; the writer was dead, but not the person to
addressed.

down, and listened to my commonplace remarks, and, patting my face like a coaxing child, said—

'Oh, Janet, what a comfortable person you are! I feel I can sleep now, and I will leave the household to you—I know you will see to everything—and don't forget Harry,' she added, with one of her sweet smiles.

'Thank God, a good night!' was Harry's news the next morning; and then he took me in his strong arms, and cried, 'Oh, Janet dear, I thought she was going! And they said I excited her; but now nurse says she will do, and that she had nice quiet sleep, and I am not to see her till I have had breakfast and a turn in the air. What tyrants nurses do become!' he said, as he applied himself to his breakfast.

Reader, I am still Janet Grant! *Poor* Janet, does any one call me? I feel no need for pity, for I have had, and still have, a very happy life—though not a wedded one—and the young ones of the next generation, especially my godson, are to me a joy for future years.

Poor Alan, you *may* say, for having no regard in his youth for the narrow way, he went from bad to worse. For a time I grieved over him, even saw him, and pleaded with him, for his own sake, for conscience' sake, to stop while he could. But he was deaf to all my entreaties, and reproached me for lack of affection, for caring more for doing what was right than for him. Painful interviews with him did more to kill the old affection than any amount of opposition could have done, for I gradually lost all respect for him. And, as time went on, I was never sorry that I had followed my good mother's wishes, and that I was able to be a help and comfort to her dear self in her last illness, and that now, when the old nest is so empty, I am still able to bear my father company. For this, and for the affection of all the brothers and sisters God has still left me, I can only say, as Granny said years ago, 'My God, I thank thee.'

A STORM IN A TEA-CUP.

BY SELINA GAYE.

IX.

THE SECOND TIME.

'You know the Landes, the great plain which stretches for many a mile to the south-west of Bordeaux, whose shifting sands have, they say, swallowed up towns and villages, and even turned a river out of its course.

'The Landes are not the same all over. A great part is treeless desert, covered only with brown heather and furze, and traversed by long, straight, interminable roads which are bordered on each side by poplars to keep the traveller from losing himself at night; but the only tree which really flourishes is the pine, of which there are large forests.

'In a mud-cottage in a wild part of the Landes, lived Pierre, the shepherd, and his wife Babet. The shepherds there walk about on high wooden stilts, which enable them to move about very rapidly, and also to keep watch over their sheep and go after any stragglers. They have a long pole to help them on, and, when they want to stand still, they stick it in the ground and rest themselves against it, and there you may see them standing out against the sky on their three long legs, passing their spare time in knitting stockings!

'Pierre was a shepherd now, but he belonged to a good old family, and had been well off; but, what with wars and troubles of all kinds, he had come down so much in the world, that at last they were actually in want, and were thankful to live in the mud hut and look after the sheep of a rich farmer.

'They had no children left, but they had a little grand-daughter who lived with them, and was a good child and did her best to help them.

'There was a bit of ground round the cottage, where, by dint of much labour, they managed to grow a few vegetables, and they had a goat and a few chickens, and a little way off there was peat which they cut for fuel, for wood there was none to be had.

'The old Mère Babet used to spin, and Pierre and Gracieuse knitted stockings, which were taken to Pau on market-days to be sold. Sometimes Gracieuse went with her grandmother; and a pretty little maiden she was in her short woollen skirt and tight bodice, with her bright, dark eyes, and rosy, gypsy face peeping out from the red cloth which was drawn over her head and fell over her shoulders after the usual Béarnaise fashion. Everybody knew la Mère Babet and Gracieuse, and everybody respected them.

'Gracieuse was a good girl, contented and hard-working; but there was one thing which she did think she should like, and that was a gold cross to tie round her throat with a black ribbon, such as well-to-do peasant-girls wear.

'There they were, several of them, lying in the jeweller's window, and she saw them and looked at them wistfully every time she went into Pau. But she never expected to have one, of course; such things were not for a poor girl like her, and there were so many other useful things to be bought, when they did get a little money! And so Gracieuse would put the thought of the gold cross out of her head again, and when she reached home she would take off her best clothes, put on her old blue petticoat and tie a red handkerchief over her head, and go off to the peat-field and fetch a basket of fuel for her grandmother, as cheerfully and contentedly as possible.

'Now, one spring morning, when the sheep were gone to feed at some distance from the hut, Mère Babet was busy raking up the ashes with a stick in readiness for the putting on of the soup-pot, and Gracieuse was sitting in the corner with her knitting.

'"What has come to the peat just lately?" said the grandmother, as she poked about on the hearth with her stick. "There are bits of hard stuff like tin in the ashes!"

'Gracieuse had noticed it too, but she did not know how it had got there any more than her grandmother.

'The shepherd, Pierre, came home to his dinner as usual, and when he was gone off again, Gracieuse was sent out to cut more peat and pile it up to dry, as the winter-stock was almost done.

'It was a soft, sunny, spring day, and Gracieuse clattered happily along in her wooden sabots, singing an old Béarnaise ballad in her clear, shrill voice. Then she began to dig out the square lumps of peat with her spade, piling them neatly up in a stack to be dried by the sun. What she was thinking of it would be hard to say; but her brown cheeks glowed with the fresh air and exercise, and she looked as happy at her work as if there were no such things as impossible gold crosses in the world. Only a few more squares were wanted to make the pile even, and she drove her spade down with all her might, pleased to have finished her task.

'But the spade struck upon something hard, one of those bits of tin the grandmother had been complaining of perhaps, and Gracieuse stooped to look. No, it was not tin; little as she knew about such matters, Gracieuse could see that this was a real bit of silver money in spite of the stains upon it, and she looked to see whether there were any more. Carefully she turned up the peat and examined it, and she ended by picking up thirty or forty coins, some silver and some gold.

'La Mère Babet could hardly believe her eyes when Gracieuse came running back with her treasure, and she hurried back to the place with her, hoping to find some more; but, though they searched for some time, only two or three more pieces were to be found.

'When Pierre came home they showed him the coins, a few of which they had rubbed up a little, and there was a great discussion as to whether they should tell any one or keep the discovery to themselves. Pierre had some idea that there was a law about the finding of treasure, but what it was he did not feel at all sure, and for the present, at all events, he put the money in his old leather purse, and tucked it away under a rafter in the roof until he should make up his mind. That is to say, he put away all but one gold piece, which he gave to Gracieuse to buy a gold cross with; for he and the grandmother loved her dearly, and were delighted to be able to give her what she had wished for so long.

'The next market-day accordingly, she set off for the town, with an old tarnished coin in her pocket, and a basket of stockings on her arm, which she exchanged for the provisions they wanted; and when she had done all her grandmother's little commissions she went away to the jeweller's shop which she knew so well. But to-day, instead of lingering outside as she had done so many times before, she went boldly in.

'The jeweller, however, happened to be busy with a customer who had great difficulty in making up his mind, and for some minutes he could not attend to her. At last, however, the gentleman told him to see what she wanted, and not keep her waiting any longer, so Gracieuse asked to look at the gold crosses, and, as she already knew them so well by sight, she was not long in making up her mind which she would have.

'She chose one, price ten francs, and put down her gold coin to pay for it. The jeweller took it up, turned it over and over, examined it carefully, and finally handed it to his customer, remarking that it was very valuable.

'Then they asked Gracieuse how she had come by it, and she answered at once that she had found it, supposing that that would satisfy them, and that she would be allowed to take her cross and go home.

'But it was no such thing! They wanted next to know how she had found it, and where; and they asked so many questions that the girl was frightened and began to cry.

'"Can't I have the gold cross, then?" she sobbed; and the stranger said, "Yes, she might have three if she liked, but she must tell them where she had found the coin."

'So Gracieuse told her tale and was allowed to carry off her prize, while a message was sent by her to her grandfather, telling him that he should not be deprived of his treasure, but should have its weight paid over to him in good French gold.'

By the time Mademoiselle had finished her story, they had reached Madame Aubert's, where she left them with Marie, who said that she had not been able to finish all her commissions, and had still two or three places to call at, news which did not at all displease Dulcie or Judy, as going in and out of the Dinan shops was amusing.

The two were walking on in front, Marie following behind with Willie, when Judy, who had been silent for two or three minutes, felt that she must speak to somebody about an idea which had just come into her head, thanks to the story about Gracieuse. She would much rather have told Fando; but, as she was not there, and Marie and Willie were of no use, she was obliged to make the best of Dulcie or hold her tongue until she reached home, which was out of the question.

'I say, Dulcie,' she began, 'I wonder whether Nanon would like a cross; what do you think?'

'I dare say she would, but—have you got ten francs?'

'No, of course not, but I *have* got a cross, not a gold one, but it's real silver, and I believe it cost more than ten francs. I don't believe that one Gracieuse bought was real gold all through; it couldn't be, unless it was as thin as thin! I expect they cheated her, and I'd much rather have real silver than sham gold myself, and I expect Nanon would too.'

'May you give it her without asking?'

'Why not? it's mine to do what I like with. I wonder whether she has been wanting one all her life, and whether she will be as pleased as Gracieuse. I do wish I had got some money though, for I don't suppose she has got a ribbon and I haven't, and she will want to put it on at once, I dare say.'

'I have some money,' ventured Dulcie, not very sure how her offer would be received, but pleased to have an opportunity of showing how sorry she was both for Nanon and Judy. 'I should like to buy Nanon a ribbon if Marie will let us.'

'Of course she will! I wonder whether it must be black though, but I do wish I had some money of my own.'

'You needn't tell her I paid for it,' said Dulcie, wishing to be kind.

'But I shall, of course! I am not going to pretend I bought it when I didn't. I feel contemptible to people who do things like that! Well, here's the shop; it *is* kind of you, Dulcie,' said Judy, with something of an effort, for she would very much have preferred that the present should be all her own.

However, the ribbon was bought, and Dulcie took advantage of the unusually amiable terms upon which they were to consult Judy about a present for Fando's birthday, which she was very anxious to buy, and they were busily discussing this question when down came a sudden and violent shower which sent every one flying in different directions for shelter. Fortunately they were close to the arcades, where they could be quite dry and look into the shops, such as they were, at the same time.

Quite a little crowd had taken refuge under the same corner-house as themselves, and Judy had enough to do to keep her two dogs in order, while Dulcie looked about to see whether there were anything that Fando would be likely to care for, as this would be such a good opportunity of buying it without her knowing. She had been gazing and considering, quite forgetting her companions, for some few minutes, when it suddenly occurred to her that the heavy plash had ceased, and that the sun was shining out brightly again. Water was rushing in a rapid stream down the gutter, though the rain had ended almost as suddenly as it had begun, and she looked round for Judy. But neither she nor the dogs, Marie or Willie, were anywhere to be seen, on either side of the street! They must have turned the corner, perhaps intending to give her a fright; and she hurried on, quite expecting to see them in a moment. But there was not a sign of them anywhere.

What should she do? She had not been many times in Dinan altogether, and, when she had, had naturally trusted to her companions without paying much heed to the names of streets, but she did know the Place des Cordeliers, from its quaint old gable-ended houses, and she knew that it was not far from there to the Porte St. Malo, and then it would be almost a straight road home. It would surely be better to try and find it rather than loiter about in the town not knowing which way to go; and she walked on quickly, but missed the right turning and found herself going down the steep old Rue de Jerzual, which she knew led to the river. That would not do, and she turned back and dived hastily down a little street to the left which brought her into the great Place St. Sauveur, with its irregular, oddly-assorted buildings, some no bigger than cottages, being wedged in between houses that were of a respectable size, if rather woe-begone in appearance. Behind the Cathedral was the garden to which Mademoiselle had taken them, so she was quite clear that she must go in the opposite direction; but there were three turnings out of the Place, and she took the one leading to the Clock-tower, where she paused a moment to consider. But when you are thoroughly bewildered, as Dulcie was by this time, it is not of much use to consider, unless you make up your mind to ask your way, which it had not yet occurred to her to do; for it was a sort of instinct with her to avoid asking for help of any kind if she possibly could, partly from a genuine wish not to give trouble unnecessarily, but partly also from a want of confidence in her fellow-creatures, and a desire to escape notice.

After waiting a moment, to try and realise where she was, and failing utterly, she started off again at a more rapid pace than before, and presently found herself in the Place Duguesclin without a notion h way to go next. Nevertheless she hurried on, quickening her steps almost to a run, until she was suddenly brought to a standstill by coming into collision with some one who had turned the corner more sharply than was prudent, and expressed his feelings by a surprised 'Hallo!' instantly followed by 'Why, Miss Dulcie, is it you? I beg your pardon!'

As soon as she heard the voice Dulcie felt as if it were just what she had been expecting all along; but it was not a relief, quite the reverse.

'And where are you flying to all by yourself, if one may ask?'

'I—I'm going home, only I can't remember the way.'

'But are you really alone? I thought I saw you with a good large party one morning at the market, and last night at La Fontaine; but do you know that you cut me—dead—both times?'

'I—I am very sorry,' murmured Dulcie, hardly knowing what she said, in her fear that Judy would bob round some corner just when she was least wanted. 'There is a maid somewhere, with two of my cousins,' she went on hurriedly; 'but somehow I missed them, and I think they must have gone home. Could you tell me the way to the Porte St. Malo?'

'To be sure!' Mr. Beaumont said good-naturedly, but with a little amusement in his voice. 'You are going quite the wrong way if that is what you want. See, there is the old Castle; it is right on the other side of the town. But I will come with you, of course.'

'Oh, *no! pray* don't! I mean—thank you; but, indeed, I can find it, if you can tell me, pray don't come.'

'And why not?' he asked coolly; 'a demoiselle who loses herself and her friends, as you do, ought not to be alone. It is nearly a straight line from here certainly, but there are a good many wrong turnings which you might take, if you have any talent that way; and, besides,' he went on, speaking so decidedly that she felt it was of no use for her to object, 'it is not at all the thing for you to be running about the town by yourself at any time, especially just now, and I am quite sure Mrs. Trafford would not approve. So I shall certainly see you safe to the gate. But how far have you to go then? Where are you staying?'

'It's only about a mile, we come by the Rue de Dinard, or the fields, generally,' faltered Dulcie, ignoring the second question, and wondering whether she had not better ask him to show her the way back to Madame Aubert's instead of to the gate.

'*Only* a mile! You can't walk by yourself—impossible! But I shall be very happy to take you.'

'Oh, *no!*' said Dulcie desperately. 'I think perhaps, after all, I had better go back to Madame Aubert's; they might be there, and if not she would send some one.'

'Well, just as you like, but I must see you into safe keeping before I leave you. I have plenty of time to take you to the Porte St. Malo, and *a mile beyond* too, if you like, so you need not think of that; but, if you would rather go to Madame Aubert's, so let it be. Let me see, her shop is close to the Grande Rue, isn't it? Choose your weapons, Miss Dulcie, for you won't get rid of me.'

And Dulcie chose Madame Aubert's, to avoid the risk of having to walk the whole way with him to Plancöet, which would be too dreadful.

The consciousness that she had been ungracious, not to say rude, did not help to make her feel more at ease, and she was much afraid too that he had noticed her clumsy way of avoiding telling him where 'home' was, and would wonder what reason she could have for doing so. But Mr. Beaumont really troubled himself very little about the matter. He saw, of course, that she did not want him to go with her, and concluded that this was her sole reason for withholding her address; but, as to the why and wherefore, perhaps she thought she would be likely to be less scolded, or more likely to meet her cousins, if she went to Madame Aubert's; and of the existence of any more important reason he did not even dream.

'You and I seem fated to meet under adverse circumstances,' said he, as they turned back, 'I wonder what the third time will be?' Dulcie heartily hoped there would not be any third time at all; but she could hardly say so with politeness. 'Have you been lost many times since we were at Dinard?' he went on.

'Not once, and I shouldn't have been to-day—only I think Judy must have done it on purpose; she likes teasing. We were standing under one of the arcades because of the rain, and when I looked up they were gone!'

'Ah!'—Mr. Beaumont was too good-natured to suggest that this was pretty much what had happened at S. Malo; but he thought it nevertheless.

'And how do you like Dinan? and what have you seen?'

'Oh, very much, and we have been to La Garaye and to Jaden, and to the great stone at S. Samson.'

'And have you and Mrs. Trafford been sketching?'

'I have, and so has one of my cousins; but Aunt Mary is not here, she had to go to Paris with Uncle John, all in a hurry and they left me at—they left me here, the very day after you went away from Dinard.'

'Ah, yes, I was surprised to see you—you never told me you were coming, you know. And you are staying with another aunt now, I suppose?'

'No, it's uncle—I mean Cousin Hester that we are staying with!' Dulcie had caught herself up only just in time, and felt very hot, while her heart beat so fast and loud, with such great thumps, that she almost expected Mr. Beaumont to hear it and ask what was the matter.

'Cousin Hester! that is the young lady who was with you last night? and who are "we?"'

'Five cousins besides me.'

'And is Miss Judy the one who begged to go and dance? I quite envied her, she seemed to enjoy it so! And so you think she left you in the lurch on purpose this afternoon? She looks quite capable of a little mischief, but uncommonly jolly! Well, and have you seen anything of *my* château, Plancöet, you know? By the bye, that is about a mile from the S. Malo Gate too, we might have passed it perhaps. Do you know where it is?'

'Yes.'

'I have not really seen it myself yet, not close, that is; but we looked down upon it one day from a white field of buckwheat. You know the narrow valley or dell, what they would call a "hollow" in Shropshire, which runs along by the side of the avenue; or rather I suppose I ought to say that the avenue runs along its edge. Well, on the other side of it, the ground rises high enough to give one a good view of the upper windows and part of the tower rising out of the trees, the only place, I should think, where you can get the two together. What a place for trees it is!'

'Yes, and for hills and little narrow valleys. It is all up and down whichever way you go almost, and even the lanes are like valleys, they are cut so deep in the rock.'

'Like grooves, or the beds of streams, and I suspect many of them are converted into streams in the winter. Yes, it helps one to understand how the peasants could defy the soldiers of the Republic for so long, though of course *this* is not La Vendée; but I believe the country is very similar farther south, and uncommonly awkward for fighting it must have been. I have seen a good deal of it lately, thanks to a friend who has been with me and wanted to explore the neighbourhood. Have you been to Combourg, Châteaubriand's place? It is a nice drive across the great viaduct and over a hilly road, through woods where they say that there are wolves and boars, as well as foxes. And the old château stands well, with its four round towers and extinguishers and the town at its feet; but it is neglected, there is no avenue, and you drive through a farmyard, which comes right up to the great broad flight of stone steps. Dear me, Miss Dulcie, what a pity it seems that these grand old places should belong to people who don't care for them! If you or I had such a place, we should know what to do with it, shouldn't we? But the present viscount does not live there, only comes for a day or two now and then, and has only one or two of the smallest rooms fitted up with bare necessaries for his own use; the rest are unfurnished, except for the huge fireplaces, which are handsomely carved and reach almost to the ceiling; and one room is called *la chambre des oiseaux*, from the birds painted on the ceiling. But it is rather dreary inside, and the dungeon and oubliettes don't make it more cheerful. If you go, you should sketch it from the other side of the large piece of water, for the sake of the reflections, that is what I did; but do you know I was thinking all the time, that I should like to have the fishing of that pond! the fish were jumping up the whole afternoon, but they are not allowed to be disturbed more than once in three years. Well, I shall have to thank Colonel Russell for one thing at all events, before I turn him out, and that is, keeping Plancöet in decent repair, and not having a farmyard at the front door! I don't quite know when I shall see it or him.'

'Don't you?' said Dulcie, with more appearance of interest than she had yet shown; for, to tell the truth, she had been so anxiously on the watch for Judy that she had not had much attention to spare for Combourg. 'Don't you? Why not?' she ventured, with a sudden hope, she hardly knew of what.

'Oh, I have not given it up, by any manner of means; it's what I came for, in great measure. But didn't you ever keep the best plum to the last, or were you too sensible? Well, I don't know that I should have kept it, if I had been left to myself; but a friend joined me rather unexpectedly, and my little château would not interest him as it does me, of course, and it will keep. Colonel Russell can't run away with it, happily, so I am waiting till I can give a whole morning to it. My friend is a very good fellow, and he likes to see all that ought to be seen; but he does not care about the old times as you do, Miss Dulcie, and—in fact, I thought I would rather go and "sentimentalise," as he would say, alone. Perhaps, if we meet a third time, I shall be able to tell you how I fared with the Colonel, or you may hear, you know, if we fall out; but it won't be just yet, for to-morrow we are off to the west among the dolmens and menhirs. And so you really have seen Plancöet? Have you seen it close—from the avenue? You have not had a glimpse of the white lady, by chance, I suppose? I should like to know whether she means to come back and welcome me as she ought to do.'

'Do you think she will?' said Dulcie, a little nervously.

'Certainly, if she has not forgotten her manners. If she does the correct thing, I should say that she ought to be seen three times, as a sort of warning, you know, before I appear in person to claim my rights. Three is the proper number in cases of this sort, isn't it?'

'I—I don't know,' said Dulcie, bewildered as to whether he were joking or not. 'Oh!' as they turned a corner and came in sight of Madame Aubert's shop—'oh, I know where I am now! And there is Madame Aubert standing at the door! *Please* don't come any further, please don't; thank you very much!'

'You are sure you are all right? Well, good-bye, then; I hope you will find your cousins. Remember me to your aunt when you write. I dare say we shall meet again somewhere.' And then, having watched her safely across, he went on his way, saying to himself, 'I wonder how many times that child will get lost in the course of her life. She was very careful not to say where she was living—about a mile from the Porte S. Malo. Hem—so that was Cousin Hester? she had a particularly pleasant voice, and she looked young to have six children left upon her hands; but one can't tell in that sort of light.'

Meanwhile Dulcie was being welcomed by Madame Aubert, who poured forth a whole torrent of questions and lamentations, assuring her, with uplifted hands, that Marie was *au désespoir* to think what had become of her.

Just at that moment Marie herself arrived with Judy and Willie, and she and Madame Aubert chattered away at a furious pace, nodding their heads, and pointing this way and that, with many a shrug of their shoulders, while Judy—well, Judy was not quite like herself, for, instead of pouncing on Dulcie and questioning her in her usual off-hand, peremptory fashion, she eyed her curiously for a minute, and then said, slowly, and in an odd tone—

'Where *have* you been? We have been racing about, looking for you, and Marie has been in ever such a way.'

'I can't help it; I looked about everywhere for *you*, and I thought you had gone away for fun; and then I lost myself, and I didn't know what to do, so I thought I had better come back here and ask Madame Aubert.'

'Well, you must have walked about a mile if you have been going all the time, and it isn't five minutes from where we were.'

'I tried to find the way home first, and then I lost myself, I told you.'

'And how did you find yourself again?'

'I had to ask,' said Dulcie, her whole face crimson.

'It's a pity you didn't do it at first, instead of at last, then; and it's more pity still you didn't keep where you were, for we weren't gone a minute.'

'You might have told me.'

'You might have *seen*, if you had looked; but you seemed as if you were glued to that window.'

'*Allons, allons!*' said Marie, bringing her gossip with Madame Aubert to a sudden close, and hurrying them off.

(*To be continued.*)

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCLXXII.

1702-1705.

THE CAMISARDS.

If the English were murmuring at the Spanish war, their old enemy France was weakened by another civil war, or rather insurrection, the last of the sparks left by the great religious wars of the former century. Louis fancied that orthodoxy meant persecution, and the Peace of Ryswick had only brought heavier troubles upon the Huguenots who had not migrated beyond his power. Zealous Roman Catholics themselves remonstrated against his severity. The Cardinal Archbishop de Noailles of Paris exhorted the King to enforce more Christian measures, so did the Duke of Beauvilliers, and on political and economical grounds, so did Marshal Catinat; but Louis was not to be persuaded, and continued to believe it his duty to extirpate, where he could not convert, the remnant of the Reformed.

The *Intendants* of the provinces acting for the Governors had almost unlimited power. One of the most severe was Lamoignon de Bâville, called 'the King of Languedoc,' which he ruled for three and thirty years; calm, methodical, and as devoid of pity as if he had been made of iron, when there was a question of implicit submission. If he fell upon an assembly of Huguenots, the outermost were shot down, the more distinguished were hung on the trees, the others sent to the galleys. Two thousand Protestants rowed the war-ships of France. It is a remarkable fact that in naval encounters, victory was almost uniformly against the slave-rowed ships, though they might have seemed to have every advantage.

Some of the clergy were almost, if not quite, as ferocious as the soldiery, in especial the Archpriest and Inspector of Missions, the Abbé de Chayla, who had fortified his abode at Pont de Montvert, and there employed tortures on his victims. Sometimes he had their eyebrows and beard tweaked out by pincers, sometimes their hands were forced to close upon burning coals, sometimes greased or oiled cotton was fastened between their fingers and then set on fire, burning them to the bone. Excitement and misery produced an exaltation of spirit among these sufferers, most of them of the degree of farmers, uneducated, except in the Bible. One man at Codognan declared that he had heard a voice crying, 'Go and comfort my people.' Shepherds in Béarn thought they heard Psalms chanted in the air. Isabeau Vincent, the Shepherdess of Dauphiné, who could neither read nor write, began at first in *patois*, afterwards in French, to utter prayers full of inspiration, and wonderful revelations were rejoicing the hearts and poured forth by the tongues of this afflicted people—increasing their enthusiasm, and further increasing the animosity, both conscientious and vindictive, of their foes. Three hundred young people were imprisoned at Uzès on this account by Bâville, and afterwards sent to the galleys; but the spirit of martyrdom was only fostered by persecution, and as the troops began to be drawn off for the Spanish War, it became the spirit of revolt.

On the 27th of July, 1702, tidings were received that at Pont de Montvert, the Abbé de Chayla had shut up a whole company of Huguenots and put them in fetters, among them two young ladies of rank. At ten o'clock at night, fifty determined men, singing a Psalm, surrounded the house, demanding the prisoners, and on the Archpriest's refusal, the doors were broken in, and a shot, which killed one of the assailants, excited their fury, as well as finding the captives bruised, swollen, showing marks of cruelty, and unable to stand. The house was set on fire, and as the priests rushed out they were killed. 'No quarter, no quarter,' was the maddened cry. The Archpriest tried letting himself down from a window, but the cord gave way, and he was found in a bush with a broken thigh. The enthusiasts thought they had Divine direction, and each passed by and struck with a dagger. 'Here's for my father broken on the wheel!' 'Here's for my brother at the galleys!' 'Here's for my mother's death from grief!' Such were the cries, as the miserable man expired under fifty-two wounds.

The next morning all the Cévennes was in arms. It is the moorland of Languedoc, the skirts and offshoots of the mountains of Auvergne, inhabited by a sturdy but vehement race, and always a last stronghold. There had Julius Cæsar met his most determined enemies, there had been a retreat of the Christians under persecution, the Franks had never conquered it, the Albigenses had taken refuge there, and the Huguenot inhabitants had endured more than twenty years of persecution, before, goaded by cruelty and inflamed by fanatics, they burst into open revolt. Bands of from forty to fifty men, shepherds, farmers, peasants, armed chiefly with axes, ploughshares, and wads, gathered together, and found hiding-places and food in the chestnut woods. Their first leaders were Roland, an old soldier, Laporte, and Castanet, and they eluded the search of Bâville and his brother-in-law, the Count de Broglie. Vengeance fell on the peasantry who were supposed to give them warning. In Alais alone there were sixty-two executions of Huguenots in a few weeks, and Bâville obtained a decree putting the district under a sort of martial law. Sequier, a leader, was captured.

'How would'st thou be treated?' asked his judge.

'As I would treat thee,' he answered; and he was burnt at Pont de Montvert in the market place, shouting words of encouragement from the flames.

There was little mercy on the part of these Huguenots, they slaughtered priests and monks, and burnt their prisons; indeed, their popular name Camisard is said to come from Camas-ard, a house burning, whence their attacks were called Camisards. The bands began to gather together into something like an army, and there came to the front a handsome spirited young man of one and twenty, named Jean Cavalier, who was a native of Anduse, but had spent some months as a baker at Geneva, and had there acquired a slight knowledge of military matters, which his wonderful talents made available against the troops raised against them, at first only a sort of provincial militia, from whom they took weapons and arms. Cruel reprisals they thought permissible, and even sanctified by the example of Israel of old. Otherwise all was piety. The Insurgents called themselves the Children of God, the Lord's flock. They kept up strict religious habits, permitting no licence, drunkenness nor oaths, and all was on an equality, with provisions in common. Their stores and hospitals were in caverns, their arms and ammunition were only what they could capture, and their bullets were made by the melting down of church-bells. There was daily preaching and prayer, and on Sunday, ministers and prophets in turn mounted some rock, and discoursed all day to their camp and the people of the villages. There were never more than ten thousand of the fighting men, but they were in close connection with all the peasantry, who warned them of any approach of the enemy, and they could disperse and unite in the most baffling manner, falling on the enemy with the war cry of Israel, 'Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered!'

The Count de Broglie was recalled, and the Court perceived that it was a serious matter, but the Minister Chamillard concealed it from the King, agreeing with Madame de Maintenon that 'for him to know all the particulars could not cure the mischief, and would be bad for him.' So as an experienced general was wanted to deal with the insurrection, the young Duke of Maine was instructed to request that a Field Marshal might command the troops in his province. Marshal Montrevel, who was chosen, showed himself determined to put down the insurrection without mercy. He was brave, but rude, ignorant, and presumptuous. He put forth two edicts on the 23rd and 24th of February, 1703, declaring that all persons taken in arms should be instantly put to death, and likewise all who gave them food, shelter, or assistance, that for every Catholic slain three heretics should be hung, and that any village where a priest or a King's soldier was killed, should be burnt.

There was a reign of terror. The Catholics were invited into the towns, the villages were burnt. On Palm Sunday, the first of April, 1703, Montrevel was informed of a meeting for worship in a mill near Nismes. He took a troop thither, found one hundred and fifty persons in it, many aged men, women, and children. He set fire to it, and had the congregation driven back into the flames. Only one girl was allowed to escape by the pity of a servant of the Marshal, but she was hung the next day, and the servant would have shared her fate but for the intercession of some nuns. To his regular troops, Montrevel added companies of volunteers, who called themselves Cadets of the Cross, or White Camisards, in opposition to the insurgents who were known as Black Camisards. Clement XI. actually gave them a bull of indulgence, for their endeavours to exterminate the accursed race sprung from the Albigenses; but these soon proved themselves mere plunderers, as savage and rapacious towards the Catholics as towards the Huguenots, and had to be disbanded.

It was a frightful war on both sides. Troops of three hundred or four hundred Camisards would suddenly burst out of a wood or from a moor, fall on a little town, a village, or château, and often burn it, and put every one in it to the sword. On the other hand, the relations of the armed men were when captured thrown into prison, and then tortured and broken on the wheel, and the country being left a desert, starvation was adding to the general misery. Cavalier's genius, and the courage of despair, actually enabled the Camisards to gain four victories over detachments of Montrevel's in the course of the winter.

The state of Languedoc could no longer be concealed from Louis XIV., and the politicians were reminded that if an English or Dutch fleet attempted a landing in the south, the Protestants of the whole district might rise. It was decided to recall Montrevel, and send Villars to take the command. This Marshal had already made up his mind that barbarity only made the Camisards desperate, and he therefore began by entreating the permission of the King to use milder means.

'I trust to you,' said Louis. 'You can well believe that I prefer the preservation of my people to their destruction, which is certain if this unhappy revolt lasts.'

The mildness did not include mercy to men taken in arms, nor any hope of their religion being tolerated; but those who surrendered were to be allowed life and liberty, either to leave the kingdom, or to live at home under the guarantee of Catholic neighbours. Villars was far superior in abilities as a general to his predecessor, and he succeeded in so cutting off the supplies, that Cavalier, after being two days without food for himself or his army, wrote to him. Villars replied, giving him hopes and relaxing his watch, so that assemblies for worship again took place at Calvisson.

An interview took place between the Marshal and the former baker's boy at Nismes, in the garden of the Recollet friars, outside the gates. Villars was much struck with his antagonist. 'He is a peasant of the lowest rank,' he wrote to the Minister-at-war, 'not twenty-two years old, and looking eighteen, small and of no imposing appearance, but of surprising firmness and good sense. He has excellent combinations for his supplies, and arranges his troops for an action as well as an experienced officer. I asked him how he could restrain his troops. "Is it possible," I said, "that at your age, and with no long habit of command, you should have no difficulty in condemning your own soldiers to death." "No, monsieur," he said, "when I thought it just." "But whom did you use to put it into execution?" "The first person I ordered, and who never hesitated to obey me."' Villars observes, 'It will be a piece of good-fortune to deprive them of a man like this;' and he finally declared Cavalier to have always acted with good faith.

Several plans were proposed, but the one preferred was that Cavalier should form three thousand of his followers into a regiment to serve in Alsace or Portugal, and in the meantime Villars assigned to him the little town of Calvisson. It was reported that freedom of worship had been granted, and crowds flocked thither for preachings and loud psalm-singing, greatly to the displeasure of the clergy, but the Archbishop of Narbonne said, 'Let us stop our ears.'

Cavalier did not find many of his comrades willing to listen to him. If he was the Morton of the French 'Old Mortality,' Roland was the Burley. 'Thou art mad,' said the old soldier, 'thou hast betrayed thy brethren, and shouldst die of shame. Go and tell the Marshal that I shall keep sword in hand till the complete and entire restoration of the Edict of Nantes.'

There were hopes among the Camisards of a descent from England, and only a hundred and twenty followed Cavalier to Alsace, where the choice was given to them of being enrolled in the royal army, or passing to some foreign one. Cavalier chose the latter alternative, and in Holland received a colonel's commission; he distinguished himself in the English service, was always an honourable and respected man, became Governor of Jersey, and died at Chelsea in 1740.

Roland fought on till he was betrayed in the Château of Castelnau on the night of the 16th of August, 1704. He had time to leap out of bed and mount his horse, and had escaped through a back gate, when a regiment of dragoons surrounded him. With his back to an old olive-tree he sold his life dearly; but, when he had fallen, his officers let themselves be easily taken. They were taken to Nismes to serve as an example; one, named Maillé, was a handsome young man, who smiled on hearing his sentence, to be broken on the wheel, never gave a cry when his arms and legs were broken, and continued to the last to encourage the rest.

Gradually, in petty combats, the other chiefs were killed, the country was desolate, the insurrection starved out, some submitted, some emigrated, and the last of the Camisards, Abraham Mazel and Clavis, were put to death at Uzès in 1710.

It is certainly remarkable that the tide of victory should have turned in favour of the English when Anne was doing her best to heal the wounds of the Church; and against the French, when the zeal of Louis was the most blind and cruel.

LECTURES ON CHURCH HISTORY GIVEN AT WINCHESTER.

BY THE EDITOR.

I.—(*continued*).

The field of labour of St. Kentigern met that of one of the great mission nerves from St. Patrick's Church in Ireland. Columba was of royal lineage on each side, and was born at Gartan among the mountains of Donegal. He was educated at the monastery of Clonard, where, in time, the Abbot wished to have him as a Bishop, and sent him to obtain consecration from a Bishop living at Clonfad.

On getting there, Columba heard the Bishop was in the field ploughing, and going to him, was warmly welcomed; but, *by mistake*, was only ordained Priest, not Bishop. After this, he travelled about in Ireland, founding monasteries and churches, till his fortieth year. He was a most eager corrector and transcriber of sacred books, and particularly wished for a copy of a Psalter belonging to Fintan, the hermit of May. Fintan would not lend it to him, so he shut himself into the church and copied it; but then Fintan claimed his manuscript! The matter was referred to the King, Diarmaid, whose oracular decision was, 'To every cow her own calf'—the copy being the offspring of the original, a maxim adhered to in the Vatican Library until the present day! Columba angrily declared that this was an unjust decision, and that he would be avenged. Just then a boy, son of the King of Connaught, who was a hostage at the palace, having accidentally killed his playfellow, fled to Columba for refuge; but was dragged away and put to death.

Greatly incensed, Columba stirred up the boy's father and the King of Connaught against Diarmaid, and they defeated him in a great battle. The Psalter which was the cause of the dispute was named the Cathach, or Book of the Battle. It was returned to Columba, and, after belonging to the clan O'Donnel, has found a home in the museum of the Irish Academy.

The bloodshed he had caused weighed on Columba's mind. Moreover, a synod of the Irish clergy met at Teltown, in County Meath, and pronounced sentence that he ought to leave his native land and win as many souls to Christ among the heathen Picts as he had caused to be dismissed from their bodies in the war. The only voices in his favour were those of the Abbot Brendan and of Fintan—who ought, it seems to us, to have shared the exile as the primary cause of the strife.

However, Columba, now forty-two years of age, accepted the penance, and in the year 563 he, with twelve comrades, launched a frail osier-boat covered with hides upon the stormy Atlantic. On Whit-Sunday they landed on a bare little rocky islet, about three miles long, and a mile and a half broad, in a bay still called Port-an-Charaich, or the Bay of the Coracle. Columba climbed to the highest point, and finding that all trace of Ireland had vanished in the distance, he decided to make it his head-quarters. Its name was Hy, since embellished as Iona, as Icolmkill—the island of Columba's cell. It was held to belong to Conall the Scot, chief of Dalriada, a kinsman of Columba, and willing to grant the island to him.

Here Columba established a monastery like those he had left behind him. There was a rampart, enclosing a green court, round which stood the little wattled huts—one for a chapel, one for the priests, one for the guests, a kitchen, and a common room for eating in. Outside was the cow-house and store-house for grain. Columba was the abbot or father, and his first twelve were soon added to.

Every morning began with devotion; every Wednesday and Friday, except between Easter and Pentecost, food was not tasted until after three o'clock, unless by those who had to welcome their many guests. Every day, indeed, shouts from across the strait proclaimed that some one was waiting to be ferried over to receive instruction or spiritual counsel from the brethren, or to be admitted among them. They lived by the labour of their own hands, and also transcribed Holy Scripture, the Psalter, the service books, lives of the saints, and other manuscripts. The writing and illumination of these Scots, both of Ireland and Iona, were wonderful, as the Gospel of Kells and that of Darrow still attest, and others, scattered in different libraries, all marked by the peculiar style of the combinations of circles, and more delicate and beautiful than the contemporary Italian.

The numbers became too large for the little island, and off-shoots were planted in the other islands and on the mainland. Columba continually made expeditions as a missionary, going in his light coracle, which could be easily carried on land. He was the apostle of the Highlands and Isles, even to the Orkneys and Zetland Isles. Many a 'Papa Stour' in our maps is a witness to the indefatigable fathers of Iona, the chief missionary Church of the sixth century. Even Iceland was visited by them before the Norse settlement.

Though this is the history of the English Church, it must not be forgotten that Columba converted Brude, the King of the Northern Picts, who lived a Christian for twenty years before his death.

Also Columba had such influence in his native Irish Dalriada, that he caused an incapable king to be set aside and a fitter appointed, and as the Scottish Dalriada was discontented at being in subjection to the Irish in 575, he proceeded to Drumcalt, near New Town Limavaddy, not far from Tara, to plead their cause, and prevailed so as to make them independent and free them from tribute. Indeed they had brought to Scotland the rough 'Stone of Empire,' which legend said had been Jacob's pillow at Bethel, and which conferred supremacy on the King who possessed it. It is the stone which was the seat of the Scotch kings when they were crowned, till Edward I. carried it off, and it is still in the Coronation Chair at Westminster. Long may it so remain! The Synod of Drumcalt actually lasted fourteen months—prelates, kings, and chiefs encamping under arms all the time. Whatever faction fights there may have been, laws, civil and ecclesiastical, were made, they broke up peaceably, and a Bard composed an ode of thanksgiving to Columba, which is still extant, and has been translated.

When Columba was preaching on the Tay, he had a meeting with Kentigern, each being attended by a numerous band of disciples. Kentigern divided his into three bands: the young men first, then the middle-aged, and lastly the old, like himself. As they advanced, Kentigern's men sang, 'In the ways of the Lord, great is the glory of the Lord,' and another body of them replied: 'The way of the just is made straight, and the path of the saints prepared.' And Columba's troop replied: 'The saints shall go as from strength to strength. Unto the God of Gods appeareth every one of them in Sion.'

The two good old fathers then met, embraced and communed together for some time. They parted with mutual blessings, and an exchange of pastoral staves, and till the Reformation, St. Columba's was preserved in a jewelled case at Ripon.

Between these two, Caledonia and Strathclyde had been Christianised, though without much abating the wildness of the people, or their proneness to fierce warfare, so that peace chiefly reigned in the numerous cells or monasteries, which can be traced by the frequent occurrence of the commencement, Kil.

The converts had a curious fashion of naming themselves Gillie—servant—of their special object of devotion; Gil-Christ, Gil-Mory, and Gillespie, are remains of this custom, the last being Gil-espiug, servant of the Bishop. Colin is the namesake of Columba, the Dove.

In the end of May, 597, Columba, who had attained a great age, set out on his last visit to the monks on the west side of his own island, the only fertile part. He could not walk so far, and travelled in a cart drawn by oxen. On reaching the field where they were at work, he told them that he had longed to depart a month before Easter, but that it had been ordained that he should wait a little longer, so that their festival might not be turned into mourning; now he felt that his time was almost come. And as they wept around him, he bade them be of good cheer and blessed them.

What a scene!—the blue sea, with purple isles and a few still snow-capped mountains under the sky of May, the toiling monks pausing from their toil, the white-haired saint blessing them from the cart, with the little, hardy, black, white-horned oxen waiting!

On the Saturday following, he went to the granary, inspected the store of corn, and gave thanks that there was enough for the present year, though he should not share it. The friend on whose arm he was leaning, wept. 'This day,' said he, 'is called in Holy Scripture, Sabbath or rest. Truly it will be a day of rest to me, for on this day shall I bid farewell to the toils of my life, and enter into the rest of Heaven. For now my Lord Jesus Christ deigns to invite me, and to Him I shall at midnight depart.'

Presently the old white pony, who daily brought milk from the grazing grounds, came and put his head on the old man's shoulder. Columba would not let the creature be driven away, but fondled it for the last time, and then going to the top of a little eminence, he lifted up his hands over the isle that had been his home for thirty-four years, and blessed it once more.

In his little hut, he began to write out the 34th Psalm, as far as the 11th verse: 'They who seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good.' There, he said, was a good place to stop, the next words were for his successor: 'Come, ye children, and hearken unto me.'

He attended vespers, went to his cell, sent tender messages to absent brethren, and at midnight, when the bell rang for matins, went once more to the chapel, in the dark, and knelt down before the altar. There his attendant found him sunk down, and raised his head upon his own knees. Lifting his hand for the blessing to the brethren, which he could not speak, Columba died in his seventy-seventh year.

We know the life of Columba in this detailed manner from the life left by Adamnan, a native of Donegal, and a monk of Iona, where he was abbot from 679 to 709. He not only wrote Columba's life while the traditions were fresh, but owing to a French bishop, who had been on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, having been wrecked at Iona, and detained there all the winter, Adamnan recorded his narrative in an admirable treatise on the 'Holy Places,' by far the best account we have of the state of Palestine in the seventh century.

The Irish Church continued to send out missionaries and hermits, who may be traced all over the Continent. St. Columbanus and St. Gall were among them. The Italian monastery of Bobbio preserves manuscripts and music from Ireland. The oldest of the seven copies of Adamnan's life belonged to a monastery on the Lake of Constance.

Nor can I forbear mentioning St. Fiagra, the hermit of Meaux, near Paris, St. Fiacre as the French called him. Some of the English troops plundered his shrine, and the last illness of Henry V. was supposed to be the effect of his wrath. 'Scotsman everywhere,' the King cried, 'in heaven and earth!' And as the welcome birth of the future Louis XIV. was ascribed to devotions at St. Fiacre's shrine, the pilgrimage was popular, and was made conveniently in hired carriages which took the name of Fiacres. The monks went out in bands, 'the Irish tonsure high on their shaven heads, their long locks flowing behind, their outfit a pastoral staff, a leathern water-bottle, a wallet, a leathern case for their service-books, and another with relics, they travelled, not only in Britain, but into Gaul, and Helvetia, and Italy, preaching the Gospel, and winning souls among the wild Franks and Burgundians.' St. Kilian, who converted some of the German tribes, was another of these Celts.

Their ritual was that of Gaul, derived apparently through Trophimus from that of Ephesus, the Liturgy of St. John. It was common to the whole Celtic Church in its foundation, but they gradually came through isolation to be more and more peculiar, and less in accordance with generally accepted customs.

Thus the Western Churches had availed themselves of the calculations of Victorius Aquitarius, an Alexandrian astronomer, to calculate the date of Easter in each year, but the Celts retained the old cycle arranged by a disciple of St. Martin of Tours. Their tonsure was likewise different from either the Greek or Roman, for they shaved the front of the head from ear to ear, and left the hair long behind.

Some Irish Church music has been preserved, but authority as to the liturgy is not to be had.

One precious relic we, however, still have, which was used in an Irish Bangor, or High Choir, in these early centuries, namely, No. 313 in 'Hymns, Ancient and Modern,' that beautiful and solemn invitation—

> 'Draw nigh and take the Body of the Lord,
> And drink the Holy Blood for thee out-poured.'

Iona was long the head-quarters of the Caledonian Church. The remnants of its buildings—mill, forest, guest-house, well, refectory and its crosses are still to be traced, though the stone ruins are of the twelfth century. And thither for nearly four centuries were the bodies of the Kings of Scotland carried for burial.

SKETCHES OF OLD NORSE LITERATURE.

III.

EARLY HISTORICAL POEMS.

FROM the anonymous Elder Edda poems we turn to the compositions of the Skalds, whose names are preserved. These were very numerous; there is a list of the 12th century, giving the names of about a hundred and sixty poets who lived between the end of the 8th and the 12th centuries. Of course, we can only notice a few of the most celebrated; of some indeed, little is known, but the names of others, and their deeds and character, hewn out by the incisive sagas, have come down to us with the reality of a good bas-relief.

To understand the true position and value of these historical Skalds we must remember that the desire of fame was the master-passion of the Norsemen in the Viking Age. As the Edda says—

'Cattle die—friends die—
Thou diest thyself also,
But the renown (*lit. word-stir*) dies not
Of those who have won a good name.'

The spoken word it was, for there were no writers to record the Norsemen's deeds, only the poets who were wont to sing of the ancient heroes they longed to rival. Hence arose the custom of reciting long poems called *Drapa* on the history, achievements, and genealogies of kings and great men—at Court, or in public assemblies.

First and above all, these poems were required to be fair and truthful; they were recited in public, in the presence of witnesses, and it was considered discreditable to misrepresent or make mistakes. Indeed, the poems seldom contain anything improbable, or show even any high flights of imagination.

Then they required to be easy to learn by heart, and thus be handed on to other speakers. Hence the complicated structure, the alliteration, stress syllables, and strict measures by which one word or one verse suggested another. Ornament of some sort was expected, but as *Skaldskap* or verse-making became by degrees a profession, a style was gradually formed, which did not require the unteachable poetic inspiration, but only accuracy of ear, a good memory, and trained ingenuity.

As in modern music, when harmony was less studied, those only usually composed who were really gifted; but now a wider musical education has produced numbers of correct composers, who have nothing *musical* to say; so the Skalds could learn a knack of verse-making which needed no poetic inspiration whatever. Some indeed, were true poets, but even these latterly wrote more or less in the same style, which no doubt required both study and ingenuity, and also a thorough acquaintance with the old mythology and former historical poems. Their aim was chiefly to record facts in a manner easy to remember, and they succeeded in handing down to the writing age (11th century) a mass of spoken literature in wonderful preservation, considering that it was transmitted through two or more generations of tradition.

Then came Ari, the first book writer, a man of true genius who could make use of this material. He wrote, and saved the early history of Scandinavia. Snorri Sturlason, the greatest of Iceland's prose writers, lived not long after Ari; he stands like a man holding a torch to cast light behind him, illuminating the dim period before books. He wrote down the old mythological legends, just in time to preserve them, and was the author of a sort of guide to poetry, giving the key to the treasures of thought which are contained in the paraphrases, illustrated by many quotations from the poets who used them. There are also other ancient glossaries—in rhyme or measure—which preserve lists of synonyms used in poetry. In one there are, for instance, a hundred and eighty different terms for a sword and its parts—and about a hundred for Odin's name. Ships, horses, birds, ladies, sea-kings, and many others of the most used nouns, have each fifty or sixty synonyms, some of them conventional enough, others of great significance, showing us the thoughts which lie at the roots of language. For instance, one name for a shield—'coin of the hall'—pictures to us the ancient halls hung with round glittering shields; a word for a mail coat—'web of the dart'—suggests how it baffles and catches the keen point. Very many synonyms require some knowledge of the myths to understand them. Poetry is the 'Mead of Odin,' the sun is his eye; the goat is 'Thor's chariot-drawer,' gold the 'serpents' bed,' and so on. It was against all rule in poetry to repeat any stressed word, and pronouns were considered in bad taste, therefore synonyms were in constant use, and the same idea meets us clothed in many different ways. In reading a *visa* or verse, first the words have to be sorted, as the grammar allows of every conceivable inversion. Then the nouns and pronouns, constantly concealed under synonyms, have to be unmasked from their disguises. At last not unfrequently emerges, instead of a poetic idea, a sort of short newspaper paragraph, giving some historical information, but ornamented by poetic suggestions, and clad in smooth and musical numbers. This is the principle of old Norse historical poetry.

Here is an average *visa* literally translated as a specimen. An old man regrets the fall of his son Thorolf, slain by foes in the Isle of Alost—

'Now from me north in the island
(Norns were angry; too soon,
Thunder fell of Smith's wand)
Thorolf, under end went.
Hinders me the burden to the meeting
Of Thor's wrestling-victor, to go
(Soon can I not avenge, though whetted,
The mind to the clash of arms) maimed.'

Smith's wand is sword; *thunder of Smith's wand* a warrior; *Thor's victor* is old age, the old woman he wrestled with at the giants' home. So the poem in free English, and with proper alliterations, two in one line, one in the next, would run thus—

'*Th*orolf! war-*th*underer,
*Th*ou in the island,
*F*ar from us, *f*ound thy death.
'*F*ew were thine years then.
I, by Thor's conqueror,
*K*ept from the camp-crowd,
*C*annot avenge me so
*S*wift as beseems me.'

Two thoughts are lost, the angry fates, and the intense wish of the father to avenge his son; but they are very difficult to translate well. Here is a prose rendering by Vigfusson of a stanza by Egil (10th century) of wind at sea—

'The sturdy giant of the forest (the wind) cuts a deep groove on either side before the beak of the ship with the chisel of the tempest; and the cold-clad devourer of woods (the gale) mercilessly sweeps the spray above the sea-king's swan (ship) like chips before a chisel.'

The times were exciting, full of the wonder of discovery and the fire of conquest, men's energies were strong and needed to express themselves in some form of art. Their poems bring us within touch of human nature as it then was, and with all drawbacks, there is much to admire. These men knew Nature in her wildest moods; there are words for every form of wave that rises in mid-ocean, or breaker that foams on the shore; words for every variety of wind and weather; volcanoes, earthquakes, icebergs were familiar to them, but all are treated with a kind of fearless supremacy. Thor was often absent from the banquet at Valhall, fighting the nature-giants, and so were his sons; living their lives bravely and even gaily, though full of effort and hardship till as they believed, inevitable fate brought the end. The Skalds often took part in the events and battles they tell of, and relate their own experiences; and many of the Vikings themselves were no mean poets.

Having noticed the general character of the historical poems, we must briefly glance at a few of the chief Skalds. Space will only allow of a slight outline of much that is full of interest.

Bragi Boddason is, we believe, the first Skald whose name is certain; he probably died before A.D. 900. Some fine battle fragments of his survive, part of a poem on Ragnar Lodbrog; his quotations from some Edda poems give a clue to their date.

While Bragi was praising Ragnar, the abhorred of England, King Alfred was bringing classical literature within reach of the Anglo-Saxons; the two streams of thought, Latin and Teuton, were meeting soon to combine. Alfred needed to be the good poet we know he was, to risk himself as minstrel in the camp of the Danes, who were probably familiar with the noble poems of the Edda.

Harald Fair-hair, first king of all Norway (10th century), set much store by the Skalds; 'their place at table was next his own,' and well they repaid him, for from the verses recited by Hornklofi and Thiodolf before his Court, and preserved by Ari, much of his history is known. Hornklofi recounts his deeds in a dialogue between a Valkyr, 'a war-like maid who despised marriage,' and a raven. The poem depicts the fiercest joy in battle; the hope of one 'makes the men leap up in hot haste and ply the oars, snapping the oar-thongs and cracking the tholes—fiercely churning the waters at the King's bidding.' Thiodolf's long genealogical poem on Harald concludes with a stanza alluding to Earl Rognvald cutting the King's tangled hair when his well-known vow was fulfilled.

'The best surname I know under the blue sky is that when Rognvald, Lord of Reim, called thee Fair-hair.' Thiodolf's fine 'Harvest Lay,' Vigfusson says, 'is a fountain-head to the mythologist.' Others of Harald's Skalds were Olvi Hnifa—or snub-nose, unlucky in his love; and Guthorm Sindri, who made poems both on Harald and his son Halfdan, then at drawn daggers. Father and son were delighted with the poems, and bade him name his reward. He asked that they should be reconciled with each other. 'So they made peace at his word.'

Iceland was now being colonised, and its solitude and comparative peace allowed men to think deeply and speak well. Kormac came first from thence, he whose mother was Irish, and whose curly black hair was his only defect in the eyes of his love Steingard. He had the Celtic poetic fire, and Celtic ill-luck, and ended a life of misfortunes in a fight in Scotland.

Then there was Holmgang, or duelling Bersi, from Iceland, and also the renowned Egil Skallagrimson. He was a marked character, ugly but very strong, greedy of gain but honest (for a Viking); true and affectionate, dauntless, shrewd, and poetical. He loved one woman only and truly; he nearly died of grief when his youngest son was drowned at sea, and was only roused by his daughter praying him rather to compose a poem to preserve his memory. 'The Son's Shipwreck' still remains the best of his poems. Another *drapa* or long poem in praise of his friend Arinbjorn, such a poem as was then only made for kings or mighty rulers, marks his affection for one of the kindest and truest of friends. They had many adventures together: Arinbjorn had saved Egil's life and replaced his wealth from his own means, and well deserved the best the Skald could give. He is drawn as the model gentleman of the period, and probably suggested to Fouquè the Sea-King Arinbjorn of his 'Magic Ring.'

When Egil was shipwrecked on the Northumberland coast he found his enemy, King Eric Bloody-axe, ruling in York. Eric resolved to put him to death, but was persuaded by Arinbjorn to allow the poet to ransom his life by composing a *drapa* in one night in his praise. Part of the 'Head Ransom' still survives, a spirited and harmonious poem, only almost too elaborate to have been possibly composed in so short a time, though the main outlines of the story are quite historical.

Einar Skallaglam or Scale-clang was the son of a daughter of Rollo's, a lady taken captive by his father in Scotland. He was the chief Skald of Earl Hakon the Great, and was a young man in Iceland when Egil was old. It is related in Egil's saga that Earl Hakon had given the young poet a splendid shield engraved with old stories and embossed in gold. This Einar brought to Egil as a present, and as the old man was from home, he left the shield in his house. Egil took it all amiss. 'Does he think I am going to sit awake to make poetry on his shield. Catch my horse, I will overtake and slay him,' he said, inspired probably by the jealousy of an author. However, Einar succeeded in pacifying him, though not long after the beautiful shield fell somehow into a cask of sour milk, and was spoilt; and Egil got twelve ounces of gold off the ornaments.

It was the dawn of Christianity in the North, but Einar was a strong heathen, and warmly congratulated his Earl on the restoration of the temples of Thor, and the holy places of the gods. Some stray verses of his show the relations between Skald and Lord. 'I cannot sing more for thee, Earl,' he says, 'unless I get some good for it. . . . I never came to a place where more store was set by money and less by poets.' He thinks even of joining the Earl's foeman, Earl Sigvald, the Joms-viking, saying, 'He will not wave us off with his hand, let us dress our oar-fitted bark with the ringed shields and set sail.' However, he remained faithful to Earl Hakon, and Vellekla, or lack of lucre, his poem on the Earl, is of great historical value. The 'Settlement book' (Landnámabók) records that Einar was drowned in Broad fjord in Iceland, where the names of Shield Isle and Cloak Isle still mark the places where his shield and cloak drifted up.

Einar's latter poems carry us beyond the date of the Norwegian Skald, Eyvind Skallaspillar, or Skald thief, i.e. the plagiarist, a surname that surprises one from its modern ring, and seems to suggest that there were already accumulated stores of poetry. He belonged to the Court of King Hakon, our Athelstan's foster-son, and composed a fine dirge on his death, in which the heathen images of an earlier dirge on King Eric Bloody-axe are used to celebrate the fame of the first Christian king of Norway, who, however, tolerated Odin worship, and was greatly loved by his people. Eyvind gives a fine description of the gallant king, after the battle in which he fell, seated with his broken sword in hand, with shattered shield and pierced mail, while two 'joyful Valkyries, bearing themselves so fairly on horseback, draw rein beside him, and leaning on their spear shafts, tell him how the gods have bidden King Hakon and a great host to their halls.'

Even more dramatic is the earlier fragment, which has been translated by Dasent. It tells of King Eric's entry into Valhall, and is all spoken drama.

In the course of it Odin asks—

'Say, Bragi! why under, ten thousand doth thunder,
Our rainbow bridge? Answer, What bodeth this host?'

Bragi answers—

'Lintel and roof-tree, rafter and bar,
Settle in hall, else pillar and post,
As these men march onward, tremble and jar,
Quiver and quake at tread of this host.
Hall doors fly open, wall-weapons rattle,
In glory excelling, from Hel's gloomy dwelling,
With whirlwind of battle our Baldur comes back.'

Odin says no, it is Eric who comes and bids some heroes by name to go out to welcome him.

'See, he steps wearily, all up the rain arch;
Long is the day's march!
Hasten the hero on threshold to meet,
Dreary the journey 'neath buckler and byrnie,
Hasten to hold up our chosen one's feet.'

There follows high praise of his prowess, and Odin is then asked by Sigmund the Volsing—

'Why snatch him then, Father, from fortune and glory?
Why not leave him rather to fill up his story
On victory's path?'

Odin answers—

'Because no man knoweth
When grey wolf so gory,
His grisly maw showeth, in Asgard's abode;
Therefore Odin calleth, and Eric fain falleth
To follow his liege lord and fight for his god.'*

King Hakon's successors and enemies, the sons of Eric Bloody-axe, usually called Gunhild (their mother's) sons, forced his faithful Skald to emigrate to Iceland, where he became very popular. A poem by him on Iceland was rewarded by every Bonder giving him 'three silver pennies of full weight, and white in the fracture.' These were made into a row of silver clasps, probably much like the present

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* 'Vikings of the Baltic,' Dasent.

Icelandic jewelry. He says he had to separate them, and sell them one by one for the 'arrows of the sea,' or herring, in the hard times of the great famine of 976 A.D. which desolated all Northern Europe. Einar's verses are very interesting, as containing the only Norse contemporary allusion to it. He tells of the snow which forced them to house the 'does of the birch-buds' or goats at mid-summer like the Finns, and that he had to give his jewelry and weapons for fish—'famine will make a man do anything.'

Passing over the names of various Icelandic Skalds which are only of interest to those who read their works, we must pause on that of the chief Skald of Olaf Tryggvason, the greatest king who ever reigned in Norway. Hallfred Vandræda (or the troublesome) Skald was an Icelander, born about 970, died 1010; his life is told in a romantic saga, which gives a vivid picture of the man. A short sketch of the life and prose translations of the verses, are given in the '*Corpus Poeticus*,' and could hardly be better done; and yet what a shadow of a shade is a book about a book. One pauses to think if it is possible to convey any of the reality, the warm human interest of such books, that comes to the traveller in Iceland, reading perhaps in his tent, those thoughts and adventures so far back in time, so present in space. The country is little changed; the farms have the same names, the rivers flow even on. We have halted, maybe, at the spot where the wild youth Hallfred was brought up with his sister Valgerd; he tall and strong, dark-haired and eyed, handsome, but with a rather ugly nose; she, a lovely girl. We can trace the unlucky love stories which marred both their lives, as we loiter by the farm in the meadows whence Hallfred and his love Kolfina watched the rich old blear-eyed soldier home from Constantinople, to whom her father had promised the maiden in marriage. Hallfred was forced into exile, to keep him out of the way. Some years later he married happily in Sweden, but he never forgot Kolfina, and to her his last verses were addressed as he lay dying on board ship in a heavy gale. He became the devoted servant of Olaf Tryggvason, for whose sake he took Christianity, though he always had a lingering regard for the old gods. And he never recovered from the loss of that loved master at the battle of Svold, but spent the remainder of his life in efforts to discover his fate and to record his deeds. His poems are valuable chiefly as history.

All this happened 900 years ago, but the line of thought of prose and verse is modern. Nothing of the classical spirit is there, nothing of the churchman or baron. The Icelanders were first in the field of modern literature. The kings they served were the objects of enthusiastic loyalty; but the monarchy was limited by the law, and the councils of the freemen. The stories that tell of monarchs dwell also on the lives of the peasants, the shipmen, the woodcutters, the girls of the dairies; they tell of the dogs barking at the farms, the ewes coming in to the milking, the lads playing at shinty on the hillsides or the ice. It was when the young men of Vatzdale were playing a great ball-play match, and the women sat on the hillside watching them, that Ingolf, the handsomest man in all the Northlands, sought his ball in vain. Hallfred's sister, the pretty Valgerd, had hidden it under her cloak. When at last he found it, he sat down by her, 'and that day he played no more,' says the saga anticipating Dante. No special evil followed, but Ingolf was inconstant, and Valgerd nearly broke her heart. When Ingolf years afterwards was dying of the wound given him by a jealous rival, he prayed that he might not be buried with his family, but by the frequented river path, that the girls might remember him as they passed by his grave to fetch water.

Heathenism was now fighting a losing battle with Christianity, both in Iceland and Norway, but the name of Haldor the Unchristian marks the pagan reaction under Earl Eric, the conqueror of Olaf Tryggvason. Skuli, the grandson of Egil Skallagrimson, and Thorrod Kolbeinson, both from Iceland, were also the Earl's Court poets. Thorrod served under our King Knut in England; and his verses about the English wars are full of interest. He tells how Earl Eric sailed up the Thames with the spring tide to a joyful meeting with Knut at Greenwich, and how after hard fighting they overcame the English Bonders near London. He composed the brilliant and well-known Lithmens' song of the siege of London, in which he exalts over those at home in Norway. 'Many a man in the land where we were born is wearing his old coat to-day, while the poet dons his hammer-sewn shirt (mail) and drenches Odin's swans with English blood.' He concludes: 'Lady, the shields were red when we followed Knut to the foray, but ever since the hard fight (Assandun) was fought, we sit merrily in fair London.'

Two contemporary Icelandic poets, Gunlaug Ormstunga and Hrafn (Raven), are more celebrated through the romantic saga of their love and jealousy than for their poetry, of which we have, however, few remains. As we advance into the 11th century, the Court poetry becomes more the mere chronicle of events, wrought into complicated metres already described, than true poetry, with one notable exception, Sighvat, the chief Skald of Olaf the Saint. Nearly twenty others are named, but Vigfusson says that 'he alone has burst through the chief difficulties of the metre, which bound all the others, and is able to express himself almost as freely and pointedly as . . . in blank verse; . . . that it is amusing how he contrives to express his meaning sometimes, by an *aside*—scorning the inane *Kennings* (synonyms) and fill-gaps of the poetasters.' Still 'it is to be regretted that he was bound to compose in Court metre, which forces him at times to dislocate his sentences, and to throw subject or object into the middle of the next paragraph,' thus straining even the extraordinary flexibility of Icelandic. Sighvat was the son of Thorfred, an Icelandic Skald, who followed Earl Sigvald and Thorkel the Tall, the Joms-viking chiefs. He was a boy when first, with his father, he followed King Olaf. He remained attached to him through life, though, much to his own regret, he was absent on a pilgrimage to Rome, when his master returned to Norway only to fall at the battle of Stickelstad. He afterwards became the wise and devoted counsellor of Olaf's son, till his death *in circa* 1045. He was of an active and courageous, though gentle and playful temper, dark-haired and dark-eyed, which was always considered rather a defect in the North, with an impediment in his speech when talking, but not when reciting verses, and even his improvisations were considered brilliant and powerful. Much of his poetry remains, and it is full of spirit and information.

His historical poems on St. Olaf and elegy on his death, show the greatest devotion to that hot-tempered but lovable man; but he did not hesitate to compose verses in praise of our King Knut—whose Court he visited, and whose greatness fired his imagination—praise that Olaf could not well brook. Sighvat was no mere courtier, but a man of marked independence of character, as was shown by the manner of his introducing the still popular name of Magnus into the North. A son of King Olaf's was born in the night, and considered so weakly that he ought to be baptized at once. Yet no one dared to wake the King to ask what his name was to be. Sighvat alone dared to name the child Magnus, considering that thus he called him after Charlemagne. Long afterwards, when this same Magnus, then a young king, was governing lawlessly, it was Sighvat who ventured to interpose and recite before him the so-called plain-speaking verses, in which he spoke roundly of his faults as a ruler, and of the complaints which his subjects had not the courage to bring forward themselves.

He was present at Olaf's fights in foreign lands, and so could tell, as he says, 'point by point how the meetings went off.' 'We had a hard onslaught on Palm Sunday; I myself kept the Easter Vigil hooded in a Poictievan helmet,' he says of a battle in France.

Olaf was a great trader, and Sighvat made a long humorous poem on his journey when sent by the King on commercial business to Earl Rognwald at Ladoga. The journey out was prosperous. 'We let the ship with awnings pitched hover off the island of Gothland e'er summer ended.' Gothland, then the rich centre of the trade of the far East to the far North, is now remote and forgotten, but still beautiful from its fair ruins and lovely climate. The Skald had pleasant riding on the Russian side of the sea, but his return journey through Sweden was marked by inhospitable people and bad boats. 'The host of the barrows (evil ghosts) take the mock ship,' he says. 'I never saw a worse; I risked my life on the old sea-ram, yet things went better than I feared.' Then in Sweden one night, 'the door was shut, I put my nose in and asked for lodging, downcast enough. "Go not in further," quoth the goodwife, "thou miserable man, we fear the wrath of Odin." They said they were holding a sacrifice to the Elves, then I went to find the man that was spoken of as the most hospitable, but the wretched digger looked grimly at me . . . I am so slanderer, but if this be the best the worst is bad indeed.'

The stanzas relating to his pilgrimage to Rome at the time of King Olaf's death are full of pathos; we translate roughly a few lines, and thus conclude this short notice of Sighvat, whose verses, though more than 800 years old, deserve to be studied for their own sake as well as their historical value.

'I stood upon the Alps, near the cities of the morning,
Remembering how the broad shields were cloven in the dawning;
The bright mailcoats were riven, the king, the royal-hearted
King, when my father still was here, now from this world departed.
Eager the man will welcome death who's true-love's life is sped,
Too dearly love is bought by those who have to mourn the dead;
The champion brave weeps cruel tears when his loved lord is slain,
We king's men mourn a heavier loss, we bear a deeper pain.
Ravens to the havens—and eagles see I flying,
But now in vain they seek the slain where Olaf's ship were lying;
From games of men I turn indoors, so sharp my sorrows sting,
Remembering joyous sports before, in presence of our King,' etc. etc.

But though Sighvat was not at the battle when King Olaf was slain, three Skalds were present, whose war-like songs are preserved—Thormod Kolbruna Skald, Gizur, and Thorfin. Thormod was one of the heroes of the romantic and picturesque foster-brother's saga, which tells of his loves and misfortunes, of his brave avenging of his foster-brother away among the storms of Greenland, and of his jealous devotion to King Olaf to the last. 'May my place ever be at thy feet, my King,' he said, 'though I am aware that a man needs a good free-board* who dares to keep near thee.' At the battle of Stickelstad he remarked sarcastically on the absence of Sighvat. 'Praying for us elsewhere, sire! it may be we require prayers,' he says, in answer to the King; 'but it would be thin round thy banner-staff if all thy Courtmen were now on the way to Rome. Never will I part from thee, Olaf, no matter where Sighvat may be running with his gold-hilted sword.'

He had his will; after the battle and the death of the King, he strolled up to a barn where women were tending the wounded. After cutting down a man who wished to take the King's ring from him, he sat down by a girl, who asked him why he looked so pale.

'Wonderest thou, sweet maid, why I look so pale?
Few are fair when wounded, from the arrow's hail
Come I, white hawk-bearer! and the bitter steel
Bites me at the heart-roots—Danish edge I feel,' etc., etc.

More is told to show the fortitude of the Skald who died with the song on Olaf still on his lips, while himself he pulled the iron out of his heart's wound. So men loved St. Olaf. Yet his true character has probably been a good deal misunderstood from the legends which monkish chroniclers believed so easily, and took such pleasure in recording. It is true that his sanctity was established soon after his death, partly from the remorse of those who were bribed to forsake so real a king, and found their country thence reduced to a mere province of Denmark, partly, no doubt, from the shock of the eclipse which marked the day of his death. The briefer Icelandic life of St. Olaf sets forth a man who was politic, firm, high-tempered, determined to weld together in one under his strong hand the various forces in the country, resolved to stamp out Odinism; but no such enthusiastic Christian missionary, no such brilliant leader as Olaf Tryggvason, part of whose lustre has no doubt embellished the memory of the later king. The monks added stories of miracles and also of cruelties in a very different style to the sagas, to the histories of both these Northern heroes. But making all deductions, one can trace in the true history of the firm and bold young warrior, moderate in prosperity, cheerful in reverses, resolved to follow the right as far as he knew it to the bitter end, to make him not unworthy of the honour he has received through many centuries as the national Saint of Norway.

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* As a ship built for rough seas, alluding to the king's high temper.

We have now reached the middle of the 11th century, when Court poetry was at its zenith, but soon to be absorbed in the written literature, whose beginnings will be the subject of the next Paper.

A SUNDAY AFTERNOON IN THE VATICAN.

NOVEMBER 10TH, 1889.

The Pope's recognition of the Beatification of the Martyr, Jean Gabriel.

STARTED 1.45 in an open carriage, with a young English Romanist staying at the *pension*, who had kindly given me one of the two tickets sent to her by a friend, one of the Pope's chamberlains. We were both, according to rule, dressed entirely in black, with only black lace over our heads. Our tickets were demanded at the foot of the long and steep flights of steps leading up to the Hall by one of the Swiss Guard, who are always on duty at this point, their guard-room immediately to the right. Their dress, designed by either Michael Angelo or Raffaelle, is most curious and picturesque, the long jackets and short trunk hose being alike formed of stripes of black, red, and yellow cloth, from which, every now and then, an extra stripe projects, lined by another of the three colours; they also carry alarming-looking halberds taller than themselves. Our umbrellas were demanded, a ticket given to us in their place, and we were then at liberty to make our way to the rear of the crowd, already about six rows deep, at the top of the slope which led to the first real steps.

Thence, for about half an hour, we all gained our way, stair by stair, as the soldiers receded before us, one step at a time. Then they suddenly withdrew altogether, and there came a rush up the long flight, not only of ourselves, but of the hundreds by this time gathered behind us; nuns, in large flapping white caps; others in black hoods and veils, pinned in three places on and into a long fold at the back; military officers, laymen, ladies and girls, in black mantillas; French pilgrims and French priests, their black bands edged with white; seminarists from the Propaganda, the blue-green, cinnamon, or other distinctive colouring of their long flapping black gowns showing their nationalities to the initiated, etc., etc.; some of the red-cloth clad German students, who had been much, and seemingly hopelessly in the rear, tearing up the further portions of the steps, with width for only one or two beyond the pillars, and so getting ahead. I wish, as before, when we had toiled up and painfully come down these same stairs to see the Sistine Chapel and the Vatican pictures, I had counted those long stairs, straight up, with no turning or help of cord or banister, each rather too broad to be taken by a woman at one step—yet nothing to do but go on and up, on and up.

I found my friend kindly waiting at the top, as she had both our tickets, and the Papal *gensd'armes*[*]—magnificent men, very tall, in dark blue cloth corded with white, top boots and white breeches—made occasional but determined demands to see the tickets of the eager crowd. We were afterwards told that, so rare was any opportunity of seeing the Pope, tickets have been forged and sold at two guineas apiece, hence probably this second demand for our credentials, mere printed and signed slips of paper. We all hurried across this Hall and through an ante-chamber, where I believe the Pope, later, alighted from his sedan-chair, and into the vast Hall, which has been recently decorated by the present Pope, Leo XIII., for such functions as those taking place in it to-day; for at 9 or 10 A.M. had been the Beatification of the Italian Christian, martyred in China, whose formal recognition as such by His Holiness was to take place this afternoon.

This Hall became a wondrous sight as the outer brilliant sun of that glorious November day, not admitted directly anywhere, gradually a little faded, and seemed to send in no real light through the thick white curtains, simple cotton, over the windows behind the tiers of galleries, with intervening columns to our left; to the right were no windows; but on both sides a blaze of soft yellow light from the countless candles. All the decorations were white, relieved by gold—the flat columns fluted thus; and in front of those gold and white flat columns, four glistening cut-glass chandeliers depended one below another, a little tapering in size towards the top; from each of these chandeliers fell the soft light of twelve large wax candles at the least. The balustrade of the galleries, one above the other between each tier, were also white and gold, and in the spandrels of their arched tops were large white marble, or painted angels, rather too perilously perched for permanency of position, however graceful and beautiful in design. There were four or five rows of these galleries on each side, and they were three deep, and for the most part filled with nuns in the large white flapping caps of the female branch of the Order to which the newly Beatified had himself belonged; but sometimes with the nuns was a French priest, or a layman or laywoman, and in many cases rows of school girls—in black dresses and black mantillas, with a green ribbon across their shoulders, and pinned at the back—who were chattering, and pointing, and gesticulating in what we English should have thought a very unseemly fashion. 'Tis true we were not in a chapel, but all the Vatican is considered consecrated ground, and an altar with lighted candles stood at the end of this long and vast Hall—I know no means of ascertaining its size—and there vespers were to be sung by the Canons and some high ecclesiastics after the

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[*] Thus I heard them called at the time, but I am not sure that they were not some of the Palatine Guard.

Pope's departure, and at the altar a musical High Mass had already been celebrated at the Beatification in the morning.

As our object was to see the Pope, I at once acquiesced in my companion's dictum, 'Let us take *front* places, however low down, and not press to the top at all,' and we could still do so about half-way up the Hall, and here a mother and daughter, two Roman Catholic acquaintances, joined us, and later a young American friend in—for civilians—the regulation full evening dress of white shirt and tye, and black broadcloth. I had my lace shawl arranged over my head, and most people wore something of this kind; but a white-haired lady opposite was in a black hat with veil all over that and her face, and a young lady behind her was in a drab felt one, which did not look at all well. The heat was so great already that we gladly anticipated another piece of etiquette in the Pope's presence, beginning to fall into desuetude, and removed our black gloves.

Just opposite us soon gathered one small party of the thousands of French pilgrims then visiting Rome, in hundreds at a time, under the guidance of a cheerful, capable, middle-aged French priest, whose face grew very black when the magnificent sergeant of the Palatine Guard picked out from behind the crowd, now many rows deep behind both us and him, two giggling, pretty German girls, and stood them in front of two of his patient French peasants, one with such a life of labour and silent thought written upon his brow and long brown face. When the girls drew out after them a pale, unhealthy-looking youth, the Priest's wrath—and very justly—overflowed, and he took him by the shoulder and half flung and half twisted him behind him with the contempt one might have shown a worm, and began to expostulate with and well scold the girls, and even touch their shoulders with a fierce '*en derrière!*' but they stood their ground until their splendid friend came down the line again and carried them off somewhere nearer the carpeted benches encircling the space around the altar. Then M. le Curé and his silent enduring pilgrims drew long breaths of satisfaction, and were once more to the front.

At first the line had been kept only by the Swiss Pontifical Guard, and at long intervals: the brilliant pieces of colour in their striped red, black, and yellow suits, and their long, cruel if picturesque-looking halberds—alarm-inspiring weapons if they were ever used!—growing continually more and more blue and brilliant as the light of day seemed lost in that of the more uncertain lights of the many candles. And what were they guarding? At long and uncertain intervals, and sometimes bareheaded, the intense heat making even this Guard in turn remove their helmets, and wipe their bedewed brows—(most happy were we in being in the front row, and so with a breathing space before us)—just the three or four feet wide of common striped cocoa-nut matting, for the coming procession of Cardinals, Bishops, Ambassadors, and Pope, a strip not even fresh and clean. Verily they are a strange people! The hangings, for instance, of the recessed galleries in which the nuns and other privileged spectators were sitting, were of crimson silk and velvet, gold-fringed and tasselled; but to his Holiness not even given a strip of red baize for his white, satin-clad, and so nearly octogenarian feet—he will be eighty, March 2nd, 1890.

Presently the Swiss Guard was reinforced by the Palatine Guard, volunteers of the tradesman class, who are called upon to serve upon these special occasions. The Swiss, who come from the Roman Catholic Cantons, are all tall, fine fellows in the prime of life—young life—who think it an honour to serve his Holiness for the term, four years, and then return home. The Palatine Guard, on the contrary, were men of all ages and sizes; most of the Italians, priests or laymen, seem to grow very fat and unwieldy in middle life, so these were a more motley collection, though of better class, the breasts of some decorated with many orders and medals, and the sergeant who had so favoured those two annoying German damsels, a magnificent man in height and bearing, and in the prime of life. Their tall helmets were nearly covered by the white falling tasselled plumes of long, narrow white feathers, or of horse hair, I hardly know which.

Now we were occasionally pressed back, and henceforth never allowed to touch the edge of the matting, even with our toes. There was no music, no sound but the general buzz of chatter of expectation, or occasional sighs of weariness as time passed on to half-past three, and we had had no further procession than that of the French and Swiss Ambassadors, splendid in uniforms and orders, and accompanied by elegant, well-dressed ladies. Our own Court has never had an Ambassador to the Vatican since Henry VIII.'s time; I believe, rather, since that of his elder daughter, Mary Tudor, and of course the United States never; thus Lord Dufferin, if present, was so only unofficially, as Ambassador to the King at the Quirinal, not to the Pope at the Vatican.

I had seen Lord Dufferin, iron-grey-haired, portly, and pleasant, bowing as he drove away from the English Church, in the morning, his dark, elegant wife beside him, and perhaps the fair girl opposite a daughter; but, if present, they did not pass up this preciously-preserved strip of matting. An usher, in a tawny or mulberry kind of cassock, sleeves of not quite the same texture or colour, did constantly pass, and two or three common lads in ordinary clothes, who must have been assisting in some way at the end of the Hall, perhaps trimming in some way the countless wax candles in the glittering candelabra suspended all around, in three dotted rows, the transparent picture of the Saint's reception into heaven, suspended over the altar, making a blaze of mellow light of especial glory at that end of the Hall. All around the four sides of the vast Hall were also arranged, at the top, a kind of wavy fringe or bordering of candles, thus . Various officials, more or less hot and perspiring, freely wiping their necks as well as their foreheads—and bald heads, if such they had—at times began to bustle a little up and down, or a few of the Guards to march to some other point—this movement bringing a most refreshing change of atmosphere, and a *sort* of fresh air to ourselves. The Hall was so vast and lofty that had we but had a very little of the ventilation created only too freely from the windows in the morning, all would have been well; but candles and people were consuming all the fresh air of the room, and what the atmosphere can have been to the Papal procession, when it came at last, one can hardly imagine.

Originally I had expected the Pope in his triple crown, and borne along by his crimson-habited bearers in satin and silk brocade, with feathers, fans, and palms; but happily, just in time, I was warned that this was not considered an occasion for full dress, and that he would wear only his ordinary simple white vesture and small, round, white skull-cap. An indescribable murmur of devotion, of long-fulfilled expectation, seemed to herald his approach, and so bent was I upon seeing him, *himself*, that I cannot tell who of that gorgeous, interesting procession came before him, and who behind. There were Cardinals in scarlet silk (?), and certainly in watered scarlet silk; other officials in black; the 'Canonici Prelati' in the dull purple familiar at Venice and Orvieto; Canonici Ordinarii, in the black cassocks and curious white-pleated and puckered short surplices we had seen in St. Peter's on All Souls' Day; the Palatine Guard, magnificent in bearing and official bravery; and, nearest body-guard, the Italian nobility, Count Orsini at their head. But above all, to my own eyes, was this pale, pure-complexioned, spare old man, so gentle and kindly and loving in aspect, so keen and brilliant in eye, walking so slowly and so near us that I could easily have touched his white vesture, even have kissed the ringed hand he held out so freely to us all; but we Anglicans felt here that the Romans ought to have this, to them, far greater happiness and honour, not ourselves. With true royal majesty His Holiness turned, first to one side, then the other, in his slow progress, that all might see him; and a wonderful thrill of admiration and sympathy with 'the sorrowful sighing of the prisoner' in the Vatican—rather at that moment of almost loyalty to this ideal majestic Head of Christendom—passed through one. He moved slowly on, upon what must have been a most fatiguingly long way for so old a man, and out of sight as the procession closed up the rear; a wonderful buzz of delight, exaltation, bursting forth behind him—in most un-English fashion in a consecrated place—until, when presumably he had reached the altar, a stentorian voice called, '*Silenzio!*' and temporary silence fell on all.

There was not one note of music, instrumental or vocal, during his progress or sojourn in the church; where, in silent prayer, he and other high dignitaries knelt, in some way acknowledging the reception of this Chinese martyr to the blessedness of Santification. For about half an hour we stood, a few of the officials passing and re-passing up and down the matting in front of us. No doubt the pressure of the crowd behind is a great help on such occasions in keeping one upright, and lessening the sense of fatigue; there was also the interest of watching bright Italian girls, of fifteen or so, behind the burly soldier next me, their hands full of their own and friends' rosaries and other little treasures passed on to them from those hopelessly at the back, and yet very eager that their little precious things should be touched, or at least blessed, by the Pope in his returning. As a matter of fact, everything and everybody was considered blessed in his blessing, thus the very black lace shawl which I am again wearing, writing in the chill sunset air of this next day—the only hour of the day when as yet one wishes for a fire.

Two or three of the Chamberlains, almost mysterious and conspiring-looking, like majestic Guido Fauxes, passed by, in black velvet, and short cloaks and ruffs, and heavy gold chains—'Spanish,' their dress is considered; these and other splendidly clad officials, not hesitating to stop and shake hands, and exchange a few words by the way with any special friends amongst the crowd; and white ruffs, if of commoner material, gave equal finish and picturesqueness to the uniform of the Swiss Guard. At length there was a murmur in the crowd below us, and we heard from many lips the whisper of English 'Father,' or Italian 'Papa.' The younger Roman Catholic lady near us had flung herself on her knees when the Pope passed up, her hands full of little rosaries and crucifixes, and touched him, causing some confusion, and thus diverting our own American friend's mind from the chief personage in the procession at the most critical moment; so this time I made him take my place, and saw His Holiness as well as I could on each side of my burly Palatine Guard. There was the same tender care to try and make all see him, and to enable them, if they would, to kiss his hand. To the French pilgrims opposite to us he again and again extended his hand, as they eagerly pressed forward in the hope of being one and all actual participators in this crowning pleasure of their pilgrimage; and I hope and think my old patient-eyed peasant enjoyed this privilege as well as the priest and younger middle-class Frenchman beside him. Their white metal medals would at once make them known to His Holiness, suspended on a green and white striped ribbon. In all the photograph shops the full face of Leo XIII. is very pleasing, but in some of the likenesses in profile the curled lips—though curled in a smile—look almost sardonic, too clever, too subtle when combined with the penetrating keenness, almost humour, of the shrewd, small, brown eye; but in life the smile, even seen in profile, has none of this expression. Every one seemed to agree that he is a very devout as well as shrewd and learned man—that his mind is still perfectly strong, if his body, at seventy-nine, is in some ways frail—that he writes all his own enclydicals and letters and spiritual directions—that if he showed himself again amongst the people he would be well received by all, and that they would like him to re-appear amongst them, and he to do so; but his Cardinals object, say he would be insulted by the Radicals, that many of the new names of the streets, new statues, etc., are an insult in themselves; and that at the beginning of his reign the Pope believed that if he insisted on re-appearing amongst his people he would probably be poisoned by his Cardinals! So that, whilst this re-appearance—as in the early years of his Papacy—was still a matter of discussion between them, he took especial precautions about his food. Now, probably, the wish itself has left him. But this policy of seclusion is considered quite suicidal; he is being forgotten by the generation growing up who have never known him.

The magnificent white lace over the Cardinals' red cuffs or sleeves caught one's eye in coming back, and the great variety of feature amongst them; too many were too obese to become their splendid dresses; one, a tall, and otherwise fine old man, sadly lame, had walked up the Hall supported by two helpers, and evidently found it difficult and painful work to come back, for some reason, with but only one. As soon as the Pope had left the chapel the organ began, and some official Vespers were proceeded with, with singing from ordinarily habited men and boys in the organ gallery to the left of the altar, the singers hardly visible through the lattice-work. I made my way up to this point; handsome crimson satin damask covering the rough wooden cross-bars of the organ platform; a green Brussels carpet, with a gem pattern, the backs of the seats upon which all the great ones of the Vatican and Rome had so lately been sitting; and not a particularly ecclesiastical-looking carpet on the altar platform and the three or four steps leading to it. Nuns, priests, schoolgirls, old ladies, old men, young men, all alike in turn, found their way up to this end, if often for a very short time and not ceasing their whispered chatter, to gaze upon the altar before which the Pope had so lately been kneeling, and to see the great Ecclesiastics still remaining, almost embarrassingly close. The chief Ecclesiastic, in stiff, gold-embroidered white satin mantle, took no notice of them, the small white tonsure on his black, almost shorn head, never moving to right or left, though he twice read a lesson (?), two attendants holding tall silver candlesticks, candles lighted, on each side of the ambone for this purpose. But the chief Canon—in purple and white lace, a gold chain not only round his neck, but something depending therefrom at the back—turned round over the carpeted benches and darted grave looks of displeasure at the chief offenders—the whispering, giggling girls in black with the green ribbons.

The great bulk of the crowd had departed as soon as the Pope had left the building, and when the great Ecclesiastic had risen and bowed with finished and dignified courtesy to the chief Canon, exchanged a 'Pax Vobiscum' with him, and gone out at the side doorway opposite the organ, the rest of the changing crowd quickly went away, and finally I found myself making my own way alone down and down the long flight of stone steps, the air even in the ante-chamber so chill and cold compared to that in the Hall, that I had been glad at once to put on the fur tippet which had, for the past two hours, been only such an incumbrance. And then I stepped out into the most lovely and brilliant Roman sunset—tender, glowing red-coal like flakes, as it were, on the clear, pale, yellow-red, and then yellow-green sky. What mattered it that it was into a most unexpectedly still crowded but absolutely carriageless world; and that, after all this dreaded and almost unprecedented fatigue, I had to walk quite a mile of the two miles home? Never does Rome look more lovely than in this tenderest, loveliest glow of sunset; and the deep interest of the scene I had been witnessing seemed, even in retrospection, to obliterate all sense of unusual physical fatigue or exhaustion.

The next morning the Pope celebrated Mass in St. Peter's—a most unusual event—for these French pilgrims alone, an almost unprecedented favour; and later they presented their gifts, one old man, with much concern, only able to present two sous, all his possible savings; but Leo XIII., with much emotion, only answered his half-ashamed explanation by bestowing upon him an especial benediction. Another, producing a small white skull cap, begged His Holiness as an especial privilege to accept it, and give him that which he was wearing in exchange. Leo at once removed his own cap and gave it to his eager petitioner; and, that given him in exchange proving too small for his head, sent his Camerario for a new one, insisting upon his own not being returned to him. Perhaps his head is of an unusual size for so spare a man, though I did not remark this. A few days later at Assisi, on seeing a large oil portrait of His Holiness in the Sacristy, I remarked to the lay brother (?) taking us round the three churches of St. Francis, upon the Pope's benevolence and benignity the previous Sunday. He seemed much pleased and interested, but, touching his own head, added significantly, 'Mai a anche gran' testa, gran' capacità.'

A. C. D.

THE DUTY OF WORKHOUSE VISITING.

If it is acknowledged to be a prominent part of the work of the Church and of Church men and women to 'visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction,' it can hardly be doubted that the large number of destitute and afflicted persons collected in our union workhouses have a claim to be included amongst the classes of persons so specified, and so especially commended to our care. So obvious, indeed, does this claim appear to be that it is a subject of wonder and astonishment to all who have thought upon it that, till within the last few years, the duty and the privilege seem to have been almost entirely ignored. I say *almost*, because it is true that here and there an isolated worker did penetrate into the recesses of these repulsive and uninviting buildings, which seemed nearly as inaccessible to the outside world as prisons. The knowledge of some individual, previous to giving up the home and entering this last abode of destitution, probably led an occasional visitor to desire to keep up an interest in an old acquaintance; but such visits were indeed few and far between, and could have had little influence beyond the person to whom they were made. Though the most important and numerous of all our public institutions, they excited no interest and no curiosity in the minds of the rate-paying public—who did not even wish to know how their money was spent—and, what is far more surprising, not even in that particular section of it whose lives were devoted to philanthropic objects and researches. The first feeble effort that I am aware was made to draw attention to this neglected class of our fellow-creatures was in 1850, when a small pamphlet was published on 'How to render our National Poor-houses Houses of Mercy.' This was issued by some ladies who had been led to visit the workhouse of their own country village, and had perceived what a large field of work it offered for sympathising and benevolent labours of all kinds, especially on the part of women. This was followed, a few years later, by other pamphlets, drawing attention more particularly to the claims and wants of our metropolitan workhouses, and some letters were inserted in the 'Guardian' in 1857 with the same object. The result of all this was the formation of the Workhouse Visiting Society in 1858, by means of which the work was organised, and a centre given for combined operations.

All this effort seemed for a long time but as seed cast hopelessly by the wayside, or as bread thrown on the waters, to be only floated down the stream into oblivion. If, however, it was a real duty that was set forth, and a real neglect that was urged upon Church-people, faith led us to believe that truth would at last prevail, and the general ignorance and indifference be overcome. And the experience of the last twenty years has not deceived this expectation. At the present time there is hardly a branch of work that excites a more general and lively interest than that which treats of the wants and condition, spiritual and temporal, of the inmates of our workhouses, and men and women everywhere are being led to consider how best they can promote their welfare.

But my object in writing these few pages is not so much to give a history of the past as to enforce the duty of the present and the future; and in order to be able to do this more effectually, I will just give a brief outline of the numbers and general condition of the classes who form the inmates of our workhouses, as well as of the means that are provided for their moral and spiritual benefit.

Most persons, whether in town or country, cannot walk very far, or observe what surrounds them, without perceiving that a workhouse forms one of the indispensable buildings of their neighbourhood; but still they may have given no further thought to the subject, and certainly may not have realised the fact that of such buildings there are no fewer than 646 in England and Wales, containing at the present time no less than 113,000 inmates, of whom nearly two-thirds are women and children.* Then let us look at the classes of whom this vast number is composed.

Till within the last few years, when a gradual enlightenment of the public mind has been taking place, there was a general impression in people's minds that the inmates were entirely a despised and unworthy set of persons, having no claim on our pity or interest; they were the dregs of society, who had brought themselves into the degraded position of receiving support from the nation by their own misconduct or idleness, and were looked upon by the general body of ratepayers as a swarm of locusts unjustly devouring the substance of industrious people. I say this was the *general* impression afloat, and to do anything in the way of kindness or sympathising help for such persons was supposed to be doing a positive injury, and offering a direct premium on idleness and vice—in a word, *encouraging pauperism.*

But whatever workhouses might have been formerly, either under the old *régime*, or since the first attempt at reformation in 1834, let us look at what they are now, and who they contain at the present time. First, there are, by far the most numerous of all the classes, the sick, incurable, and infirm, exceeding all others to a degree that gives our so-called *work*houses a claim to be rather described as hospitals, or asylums for the sick and physically afflicted, by whom no *work* can possibly be done. Then there are the children, both in schools and nurseries; the former class being now, in most instances, entirely separated from the adults—the infants and little children alone remaining with their mothers in the workhouse. Thirdly, there are the so-called 'able-bodied'—those who were formerly supposed to constitute the *chief* population of our workhouses, but are now known, to our great satisfaction, to be only a comparatively small minority, and barely sufficient, in many places, to do the necessary work of the establishment. As this class is generally considered to be composed of persons all under sixty years of age, it may be supposed that many of these are really incapable of performing laborious work, though perhaps not bad enough to be entitled to admission to the infirm wards. Probably a large proportion of this class, whether men or women, are of very doubtful, if not absolutely bad, character; and of the younger women, it is certain that their misconduct has led them to this position.

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* In the metropolitan workhouses alone there are thirty-five workhouses, containing from 25,000 to 30,000 inmates.

In looking, therefore, at these three classes, or chief divisions of our workhouse inmates, it is evident what a wide field of occupation is spread out before us, and that the Workhouse Visiting Society was not wrong when it commended these three branches of work to its members, and proclaimed its purposes to be: 1. For befriending the destitute and orphan children while in the schools, and after they are placed in situations; 2. For the instruction and comfort of the sick and afflicted; 3. For the benefit of girls of good character as well as of the ignorant and depraved.

Here was work to suit all tastes and capacities and opportunities of leisure, and in many respects more attractive and practicable than other kinds of visiting the poor, either in their homes or in other institutions. Ladies, even very young ones, could venture into a workhouse without the slightest risk or danger of any kind, and they could go *alone*, which in itself was a great advantage; the wards were, generally speaking, clean and unobjectionable even to fastidious tastes, and free from fear of infection, which cannot always be the case in hospitals.

Here were all ages and characters to deal with; young and old, sick and well, pious old men and women, patiently waiting for their summons, or lingering out years of trial and suffering, or hardened and ignorant sinners, whether old and young, who needed teaching as urgently as any child in the school.

And who but women could undertake such work as this? Voluntary efforts alone could attempt it. Salaries are unwillingly and sparingly granted out of hardly-gathered rates, and the staff of officials in every workhouse (amongst the larger ones) is quite inadequate to the amount of work required. To look to them, therefore, for any extra duties involving time or exertion is utterly hopeless. But it may be said, there is the chaplain who is appointed to do this particular work, and whose time may be supposed to be devoted to it. Those who imagine thus, little know what the duties of a chaplain are, or the populations of many of our larger workhouses; also that in many in England there are no appointed chaplains at all. The instances are few, indeed, where he is entirely at the service of the workhouse; other, probably parish duties, take up by far the chief part of his time, for there are few salaries given for these posts that make it possible to depend entirely upon them for support. To many it is simply impracticable for them to go into any ward more than once a week, unless for an urgent sick or dying case; to visit any on Sundays is also impossible, because, with services once or twice a day in a room, or so-called chapel, and work out of doors, there is of course no time left. In the London workhouses, varying in population from 400 or 500 to 2000, how is it possible that one clergyman can suffice for all the varied wants and necessities of his flock, far exceeding as they do in numbers and requirements that of any hospital?

It must appear to be an almost needless task, however, to argue on such a subject as this. Were the entire time of the most devoted chaplain given to his duties within the workhouse, it is quite evident that he cannot possibly accomplish all that *might* be done by women, supplementing his labours by voluntary efforts; and therefore to argue, as many guardians have done, that *because* there was a paid chaplain no other assistance was needed, only shows a lamentable ignorance of the facts of the case and of human nature. Ladies going as voluntary assistants can visit the wards daily, and so are able to obtain a far greater and more continued influence than can be supported without this agency; and then, to gain the sympathy and win the hearts and confidence of the sick and dying, and thus open the way for the ministrations of the clergyman, who can and will do this as women? With the younger ones it is almost hopeless for clergymen to attempt to deal, and as a rule, I believe, they do not attempt to do so; for instance, the time of this class is so fully occupied in the day, that there is no opportunity of seeing them except in the evenings and on Sundays, when it is impossible for the clergyman to attend; the consequence is that, generally speaking, this class of persons pass out as they come in, after a few weeks or months or years of sojourn at the public expense, entirely uninfluenced for good, and with no endeavours made to turn them to better ways.

It is evident, then, that it is a mere excuse to say that lady visitors are not wanted because the work is done by others. Such is not the case, and the vast opportunities of influence for good over the minds of hundreds or thousands of our fellow-creatures are left unused, though they are within our reach and control.

Our work is expressly designed to be under the sanction of the chaplain and in accordance with his wishes, as well as with the rules and arrangements of the establishment, so that no interference may take place with those who have the authority. A chaplain who feels his responsibility and sees the vast amount of work around him in the varied population of a workhouse can hardly fail to welcome the assistance that a staff of lady visitors would afford. And in order that the work may be carried on with encouragement and zeal, it is advisable that there should be occasional, if not frequent, meetings amongst themselves, and that the visiting should be carefully arranged, each lady having a ward assigned to her, so that none may be neglected, and none over-visited, which would otherwise be the case. As to the frequency of the visits and the other details of the plan, it is impossible to enter into them here, and they are best left to the discretion of persons each in their own locality. Those who are in earnest about the work will find no difficulty in carrying it out to their own satisfaction, and certainly will reap the gratitude and good-will of those to whom they go.

There is no place where visitors are so welcome as in a workhouse. From the uniform routine and dull monotony of the life, any change is acceptable, and sympathy is precious. Especially on Sundays are the forlorn inmates to be commended to the Christian services of their more fortunate fellow-creatures. On that day, unless they are able to move from their wards to attend the worship of the assembled inmates in the chapel or dining-hall, there is nothing to mark the sacred day or break the chill silence or idle gossip of the wards where numbers of sick or bed-ridden or infirm persons are compelled to remain. Some who have thus been visited for the first time have expressed their joy at hearing again the services of their Church, and by the manner in which they join in them show that they have been accustomed previously to attend them. That they should be deprived therefore of this privilege for years, perhaps, and those the last of their lives, is surely greatly to be lamented and a circumstance that we should endeavour to obviate.

And is it not a remarkable fact that just when all this work in our Church is being brought to light and urged upon us, God is also awaking in the hearts of the people, of women more especially, a stronger desire for service and employment than at any other time before? Surely the two facts are intended to meet, and bring forth fruit to the glory of God and the Church and the good of our fellow-creatures. A life of usefulness alone is a life of happiness, and only in serving others can we ourselves be helped on our heavenward course.

Though in the preceding remarks I have mentioned only the work of women in this service to the poor and afflicted, I by no means intend it to be supposed that the other sex are excluded from sharing in it. On the contrary, they are most welcome members of visiting committees, and have done most efficient duty in the wards of the men, especially on Sundays, the day when they are most at leisure. We would, therefore, earnestly invite their co-operation, assuring them that there is work for all in this vast field, and our earnest desire is to see labourers speedily sent forth into it, so that every workhouse in the land may have its staff of willing visitors.

In conclusion, it may be useful and interesting to name a few of the voluntary organisations which have been added since the work began, more than thirty years ago. A small association was started in Marylebone, nearly as long ago, by some ladies who undertook to visit and care for the girls who were sent out from the country schools of that parish. This thoughtful and necessary plan has long since developed into the vast 'association for befriending young servants' in the Metropolitan district, which now numbers the objects of its care by thousands, and was inaugurated by the valuable labours and suggestions of the late Mrs. Nassau Senior, when inspector of Poor Law schools. This important work is now also carried on in the country by a branch of the Girls' Friendly Society, which specially undertakes to look after those in workhouses; and I would earnestly advise all who have the care of these forlorn girls, 'the children of the State,' to add this necessary supplementary after-care for all who are sent out into the world.

Then for the older, and alas! too frequent, sad cases who return to the workhouses in sickness and disgrace, there are now most valuable committees formed for helping them. 'Workhouse girls' aid committees' have been able to carry out good work in many unions by saving those at least who enter for the first time from returning many times, as is now too often the case. And one branch of special work is that inaugurated some years since and known as the 'Brabazon scheme,' founded by the present Countess of Meath. It is managed by ladies who give the employment of light work to those infirm inmates, both men and women, who are incapable of doing anything for the house—knitting and needlework of all kinds, as well as other occupations suited for men, are done by hands that at first sight would be thought incapable of aught but entire idleness. The blessing and contentment gained by many poor sufferers through this happy thought can hardly be estimated by those who have not seen the working of the scheme.*

Lastly, I may mention that in some of the larger workhouses, a plan has been adopted, which though not generally practicable for voluntary workers, it may yet be useful to name, for suggestions to guardians; this is to provide teachers for the idle hours of the evening, both for the male and female adult inmates, who during the interval from 6.30 to 8 P.M., their bed-time, are left to their own thoughts and devices, the work for the day being ended. Various kinds of useful employment in knitting and needlework have been taught to women and girls, besides instruction in reading and writing, all of which may assist them to regain a position outside the

* Further information can be obtained from Miss Medhurst, 83, Lancaster Gate, W., with a pamphlet explaining the scheme.

workhouse, and the opportunities have been warmly and eagerly welcomed, friendly relations being established between the inmates and their teachers, which cannot but be productive of good results. Were the plan more widely known, we believe it would be more generally adopted than it is.

If the various schemes I have ventured to suggest for the consideration of visitors were more generally carried out in addition to the legal machinery and management, then might we hope to see some better results from our vast Poor Law institutions than at present, and the wish expressed so long ago by King William III. to his Parliament, nearly two hundred years ago, more nearly realised: 'Workhouses, under a prudent and good arrangement, will answer all the ends of charity to the poor, in regard to their souls and bodies; they may be made, properly speaking, nurseries for religion, virtue and industry, by having daily prayers, and the Scriptures constantly read, and poor children Christianly instructed.'

RULES FOR VISITORS TO WORKHOUSES.

The following Rules were adopted by the Workhouse Visiting Society in 1857, and have ever since been proved to be useful and suitable. As information is constantly being asked for, they are therefore now reprinted, in the hope that they may promote the object, and assist in spreading the original work, of the Society throughout the country.

1. The names of all visitors are to be submitted to the Guardians and Chaplains.
2. Visitors shall attend at hours most convenient to the officers and inmates, and shall observe the rules of the house.
3. Visitors shall abstain from all interference with the religious opinions of those who differ from them.
4. Any communication between the visitors and the authorities shall be made in writing, by the Secretary, and with the sanction of the Local Committee.
5. Visitors will endeavour to promote the formation and enlargment of Workhouse Libraries.
6. The number of visitors to be according to the number and size of the wards to be visited.
7. Meetings to be held monthly or quarterly, and all visits to be entered in a book.
8. Visitors are recommended not to encourage complaints from the inmates, nor to repeat them to the Authorities, but rather to endeavour to introduce a spirit of cheerfulness and content.

LOUISA TWINING.

CONVERSATION UPON BOOKS.

Spider. Isn't it delightful? Here's another of the Lewis Caroll books, *Sylvie and Bruno* (Macmillan).

Arachne. Is it as quaintly droll as the rest? I suppose we have yet to prove whether there are comicalities that stick in one's memory like 'The Mock Turtle,' or the Jabberwock on the Conventional signs in the Map.

S. There is a gardener given to singing rhymes that give one a vehement inclination to parody, as for instance—

'He thought he saw a banker's clerk
  Descending from a 'bus,
He looked again and saw it was
  A hippopotamus.
"If this should stay to dine," he said,
  "There won't be much for us."'

And the picture, by Harry Furniss, is such a delightful mixture of banker's clerk and hippo—— The story is an odd mixture, the wild, droll, fairy part coming as a dream between a more matter-of-fact set of scenes with a young doctor, who is hopelessly in love with a Lady Muriel, bringing in some graver thoughts. There is a preface where some other thoughts and wishes are brought in, one for a Children's Shakespeare, which is all very well, but another for a Children's Bible, leaving out all the Judgments, such as the Flood. You don't think that right, do you?

A. Certainly not! A child will not love God the more truly or nobly for not knowing the fear of Him. It is not the parent who never punishes who is most respected or loved, and even for a child the outlook is very imperfect that does not include the doom and guilt of sin. Indeed, without that, where would be the need of any redemption. I am sorry that should be in the book which is sure to be everywhere read and loved.

S. Well, our good old friend, *A Loyal Mind*, by Eleanor Price (Remington), is republished.

A. I always liked that story. The picture of the imperious conventional squire's family, in contact with the bright unconventional young clergyman and his mother, is most instructive as well as very clever. Then the scholarly old clergyman is a beautiful picture, and the silly little Miss Wade, who does all the mischief, is capitally drawn, and Hetty herself is charming, though perhaps an older person would have thought it better not to rush into other people's affairs.

S. That secret! What would story-books do without secrets? And that brings us to the question, whether in *Lil* (Smith and Innes) the papers, proving Sylvia not to be a Wyatt at all, ought to have been destroyed.

A. It was a generous impulse of Ken's, but the right or wrong turned on what we are not told, whether he was, or was not, the last of his race. If he was, he was free to act; if not, it was not fair on his relations to let Sylvia remain as heiress in her own right, supposing he had died and without children. He need not have told Sylvia, but the papers ought to have been recoverable. It has much of the peculiar prettiness of the author of *Laddie*, and more sense in it than the other recent stories. The doctor and his flock, dear bright Lil who will not be a conventional invalid, are charming, and Archie going off resolutely to his work is very well managed and good for the readers, who were primarily the G. F. S. maidens who take in *Friendly Work*. I am rather amused at Stella Austin's complaints of her critics in *Paul's Friend* (Smith and Innes). She says that they complain of writing down to children if she uses baby-language. Now it does not make a book easier to a child to imitate its speech in spelling. It knows what *you* means by the eye, but it does not know 'oo'; it knows mother, but does not know 'muzzer.' I am glad to see that *Paul's Friend* is free from these offences, and it makes a very pleasant story with much heart and soul in it, though not very probable as far as the uncle is concerned.

S. Three Little Maids (Smith and Innes) opens delightfully, with the damsels dancing on the top of the wall. I can't help thinking some of the fun must be a real reminiscence. It is like a story of the last generation, a number of amusing adventures, but without a central point or plot, and with one nice gentleman, whose good advice is rather too lengthy for modern taste; but the fun is great, and children will like it.

A. What is Jujulee?

S. It is short for Jubilee, the name of a boy born on the Jubilee-day. He is carried off by croup while still in arms, and the effect of his little life and death on those around is prettily conceived, but told in rather affected style.

A. Mrs. Molesworth's *Rectory Children* (Macmillan) is, as usual, good and sensible, though it might not be often that such a friendship as she describes would be beneficial. There are two, or rather three, more nice children's books published by Wells Gardiner: *Quite Unexpected*, where a bevy of Indian children descend on their uncles and aunts; and *A Family of Four*, which carries on their history a little further. *Right Side Up* is likewise a droll story for little ones.

S. Then there are two biographies of American authoresses, Mrs. Beecher-Stowe and Miss Alcott.

A. You are not old enough to remember the sensation *Uncle Tom's Cabin* made, when every one everywhere was reading it, and shedding bucketsful of tears over it.

S. Like *John Inglesant?*

A. Far more than *John Inglesant*. For that is a book only to be appreciated by people of cultivation, whereas every one could enter into *Uncle Tom*. And there was the knowledge that the terrible things there shown up with so much pathos were actually going on, or rather there were controversies whether there was not exaggeration.

S. Were there?

A. I believe—indeed, I am sure, that there was full authority for every statement and scene. Only Uncle Tom himself was an exceptional negro, though a portrait of a real one; and so, too, Eliza and her George were not of the ordinary stamp. Did you ever read it?

S. No.

A. Forty years ago it was a wonder not to have read it. But I really think you should, for it is a work of real power and beauty, a great tragedy, and one which had an actual effect on the history of the world.

S. And here we have Mrs. Beecher-Stowe's life.

A. Not that there is anything very remarkable in it, except, perhaps, that the authorship seems to have been taken up more as a means of helping the household than as an outlet for the expression of her mind. This is, I think, rather uncommon when there is such undoubted genius as she shows, not only in *Uncle Tom*, but in her other books, such as *Dred*, and *The Pearl of Orr's Island*.

S. Do you think her a greater genius than Louisa Alcott?

A. Certainly. *Uncle Tom* will make a mark in history for generations to come, and Topsy is a proverb even now. Miss Alcott fell short, even to her own perceptions, when she attempted deep tragedy, and could only achieve sensationalism, such as her own good sense and principle rejected. Her charm is in the quiet humour, naturalness, and affectionateness of her descriptions, and the good sense and principle underlying them. Besides, a great deal is the experience of her own life. In *Little Women* the picture of her own childhood made her fortune; she had a great struggle, together with her sisters, to maintain the family; and then came the happiness of making all easy to others. It was a brave and helpful life, and she was a true Aunt Jo.

S. I see, too, we have the biographies of Strafford and Walpole among the Statesmen (Macmillan).

A. And a delightful one of Bishop Hannington, called *Lion-hearted*, an abridgment for young people of the longer life, and really more interesting.

S. Mrs. Sidney Lear's *Five Minutes Daily Readings of Poetry* (Rivington) is a charming set of selections of pieces—not mere scraps—but enough to enjoy for every day in the year.

A. And for mother's meetings, the Rev. Benjamin Waugh's *Come, ye Children, and Hearken* (Cassell), provides some short, good readings, though they are primarily meant for children. For such readings too are *Helpful Thoughts for Our Working Sisters* (Nisbet), and Austin Clare's *Words in Season to Working Women* (Masters), both excellent, the latter for G. F. S.

S. Then let me tell you of a very prettily illustrated book, with photographs of the Pyrenees, Lucy Thornton's *Story of a Poodle* (Samson Low).

FAITH AND CONDUCT: A CONVERSATION.*

'Uncle Walter,' said a tall, thoughtful-looking girl of twenty-five to a grey-haired, keen-faced clergyman, as they were pacing together down the garden walk in the summer twilight, 'I do so wish you would recommend me a religious book for Edward.'

'Would he read it?' said her uncle. 'A young man who has made such a successful start in science often has not had time or inclination to study religion; and I rather question whether Edward has investigated the subject.'

'No; but I believe he would if one gave him the right thing. He is a very good fellow, Uncle Walter. I wish he would talk to you. I wonder if I may tell you—privately—all about him? You won't speak of it to any one else?'

'No, Alice, I will treat it as absolutely confidential.'

'Thank you; I shall be so glad to get your advice. Well, the fact is, that though he has always been so good and steady, and worked like a horse for all his examinations, I don't think, just now, he believes in anything but science. He talks to me about it, but he would not for anything let father or mother know, for fear of distressing them, and he does not talk to the younger ones at all about it, for fear of upsetting their ideas. With me, you know, he thinks it does not matter.'

A half smile flickered on Walter Beaumont's lips.

'Well, you know, of course, when one has been three years at college, one has come across people of different views,' said Alice, 'and learnt more or less to hold one's own.'

'I beg your pardon, my dear; I was only a little amused at the vastness of your age in Edward's eyes. Now tell me all you can about him, and I will give the best advice I can.'

'Well, ever since he was eighteen, he says, science has seemed the only true thing in the world to him, the only thing that has any certainty. He was taught like the rest of us when he was a boy, confirmed at school and all that, but his childish belief never seemed to form itself into grown-up reasonable belief as mine did. And when I say, as Canon P. used to say to us at Oxbridge: "Take the Christian beliefs on trust and you will find they work," he says: "The first axiom of science is not to take anything on trust before it is verified, and I must verify before I can believe."'

Mr. Beaumont walked on in silence a little way.

'Of course,' he said, 'if Edward expects to find scientific proof

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* 'Faith and Conduct: an Essay on Verifiable Religion,' Macmillan, 1867.

—meaning proof to the outside senses, of the facts of Christianity—he will wait a long time, as long as if he tried by investigations of the nature of the ear to discover why the Hallelujah Chorus gives us more pleasure than "Vilikins and his Dinah," or whatever may be its popular representative at the present day. But if he will take mental and moral experience into consideration, I don't think he need despair of satisfactory verification. What does he say to the facts of religious experience? does he allow them to exist?'

'Yes; but he thinks they are all imaginary. He says we believe that God is good, and that there is a future life, because we wish to believe it, and it makes us happier. Once I said, "Then why don't I believe that I am faultless, as it would make me much happier if I did? and why do people, the more they love the ideal they aim at, feel their shortcomings the more?" Then he went off on Christianity producing humility, in a way he would certainly have said was shirking the point if it had come from me.'

'Well, Alice, I have a book here with me now that if you like I will leave with you. You had better read it yourself, and then, if you will, pass it on to Edward. It is called "Faith and Conduct; an Essay on Verifiable Religion."'

'That sounds just the sort of thing he wants. But does he mean that you can verify *all* that we call Christianity?'

'No, that is an idea that the author expressly disclaims. But what he holds is that a very important body of religious beliefs may be proved first from experience—from "knowledge derived immediately from the facts of conduct"—and next from faith, experience supplemented by religious emotion. He claims as verifiable from experience that man is free and responsible, and that God is great, wise, just, and righteous; and from emotion the knowledge of a loving Providence, of God's character as one of love, loving beauty in the world and in human character; and the possibility (though he says it is seldom found but in connection with Christianity) of the quality we call the love of God in mankind. There he stops short, saying that what is beyond this belongs to the Religion of Authority, which does not come within the scope of his present book.'

'I see,' said Alice; 'but then, Uncle Walter, does not he postulate more than people in Edward's position would be ready to allow? Edward does not feel sure about the existence of God, except what he calls the unknown force which drives the universe.'

'Well, my dear, he *does* postulate, as verifiable by experience, that there is a power outside us which brings force to bear upon us in the interests of righteousness. That is, as you know, the well-known phrase of Arnold in other words. If Edward does not grant that, of course, the other propositions of the book will be meaningless to him.'

'How curious,' said Alice musingly, 'that one should find so much built upon that phrase which so many people think so shocking.'

'What people think shocking, I suppose,' said Mr. Beaumont, 'is that they look upon that phrase as the sum of belief, instead of the ground from which belief can be deduced. If I want to go to France, the first step towards my getting there is that I should believe that the sea divides it from England, otherwise, I may go looking for France all over England, Wales, and Scotland, and, as a matter of certainty, I shall not find it. It strikes one as a truism when stated, but is a necessary proposition all the same. So, without the belief expressed in Arnold's phrase, no one will ever verify any religious beliefs by the help of experience. But of course it is not every one who wants to verify belief at all. Those who are already in the region of faith may be compared to people who cross the Channel in balloons, to whom it is immaterial whether they pass over land or water, provided their balloons act properly. But Edward, as things are now, must feel his way more tentatively.'

'Tell me the line the book takes,' said Alice.

'I could hardly do that on the spur of the moment, the argument is too close. However, it starts from premises which people in Edward's position naturally accept, and goes on to show that the particular doctrines we spoke of, are corroborated by the universal moral experience of men; and he has one very striking passage, where, working on Butler's lines, he shows that the gap between reason and faith is not more startling than the gap between our sense-perceptions and our consciousness, which the most materialist of sceptics bridges over in thought every moment of his life.'

'And,' said Alice, 'you don't think it would induce Edward to be content to stop where you say the author stops, without going on to Christianity?'

'I should say the stage of reasoning with which the author deals in this book stopped there, rather than the author. The remark with which the book ends is, I think, very striking: "Our task is criticism, and where criticism ceases to be legitimate, we lay down the pen, not because we have reached the limits of religion, but because we have reached the limits of our own powers. In ancient temples there were *adyta* where the light of day never penetrated, and into which none might enter but the priests; so all the religions which have power among men have also their *adyta*, which are not to be searched by the light of critical method, and may only be visited by those who have sworn fidelity." Here is the book, Alice, and I hope it may help Edward towards the entrance of those *adyta*. I believe his mind is candid, and I quite hope, please God, it may.'

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

BY LOUISA DUNDAS.

III.

As we have already seen, this Book falls naturally into three divisions; but the events of the latter part are so thickly crowded together that we included in our second paper the earlier division of Saul's reign, down to his rejection at Gilgal. (chap. xv.) Readers of the Paragraph Bible will see that this chapter properly ends at 'Samuel mourned for Saul'—the next clause being the opening of the new subject, which we shall now consider. Samuel's visit to Bethlehem is an important 'new departure.' As long as Saul sat on the throne, God's purpose in giving a king to Israel could not be fully made known. Israel's faithless impatience had brought about its punishment in the evil, unsatisfactory reign of Saul; but, as it has been beautifully said, 'Men are apt to mistake the Divine patience for the Divine permission.' God, in His fulness of time, now set aside Benjamin for the long-predicted royal tribe—'He chose the house of Judah, which He loved,'—and the man, both prophet and king, who of all human creatures has been permitted most closely to typify His Incarnate Son, besides being, in the flesh, the direct ancestor of Christ. Samuel goes to Bethlehem, startling by his august presence the humble pastoral household. We now see the place of the Book of Ruth in the Canon. The Moabitish stranger, entering by simple piety and faith among Israel's daughters, is Jesse's grandmother; and, in this mingling of Gentile with Jewish blood, we have the earnest of reconciliation of all the nations of the Gentile world in Him Whose birth should one day make this mountain village greater than all the cities of the earth.

Chap. xvi. has suggested a difficulty to some minds, i.e. that Samuel was commanded to speak and act with duplicity and disloyalty. Careful reading will surely dispel this idea. There was no disturbance of the existing state of matters, no suggested rebellion against Saul. His death in battle was foreknown of God, and he had been plainly told of the cessation of his own rule. Neither was there untruth. Samuel was to offer a sacrifice for the household, and to pass the sons in review, bestowing a solemn unction and blessing on the one God should indicate. But, of all present, Samuel was the only one informed of the significance of the action. In the withholding, by a superior, of a yet undeveloped purpose, till the proper time, there is no duplicity. What a striking picture is given to us! The blazing sacrificial fire, the aged prophet, struck with Eliab's manly beauty—as he had long ago been struck with that of Saul—recalled to his better judgment by the word of Him Who seeth not as man seeth. And then, so insignificant as not to be summoned to the sacrifice, the youngest—'ruddy, and of beautiful eyes' (R. V. margin), goodly to look upon—and the word: 'Arise, anoint him, for this is he.' It is not clear whether David was the seventh or eighth of the sons; the Hebrew idiom may mean either, only seven are named in 1 Chron. ii. The father looked on, doubtless in speechless awe; the brothers, with the dawning envy later made manifest; none, probably, knowing that this portended a change of dynasty; but to the boy himself—

'While the Prophet's gifted oil
Seals thee for a path of toil,'*

there is an awakening of his own dormant prophetic power—David, too, becomes a 'Nabi.' It is probable that he cultivated his powers—especially of music—in the schools of the prophets, and that thus he attracted the notice of Saul's courtiers, in their anxiety to soothe the dark brooding melancholy—the 'evil spirit' now beginning to harass and trouble the unhappy king. (v. 21.) There is a discrepancy here which we shall notice further on.

Chap. xvii. A fresh outbreak of Philistine invasion dispels Saul's mental malady, and calls him to lead Israel into the field. The locality can be fairly well traced, and is very interesting. Ephes-dammim, 'boundary of blood,' is possibly the modern Damùn, on the western slopes of Judah, where the hill-country subsides into the Shephelah, or maritime plain on the borders of Philistia. The R. V. rightly marks the distinction in vv. 2, 3, between vale and valley, two Hebrew terms being employed which seem to correspond exactly with the Scottish 'strath' and 'cleuch,'—the one a wide sweep between hills, where an army might be drawn up in battle array, and the other a gully or ravine, on the brink of which Goliath stood, repeating day by day his insolent defiance to single combat. Not far to the northward was Beth-shemesh, and to the east, further up among the recesses of the hills, David was feeding his flocks, when bidden by his father to run down to the host and see how his brethren fared. Goliath was probably a survivor of the giant-races, of whom we have scattered notices in various passages of Scripture.† In the description of his armour, we have one of the best accounts on record of the panoply of a warrior at that ancient date.* There is a curious addition in the 'Targum of Jonathan' to his mocking challenge. He declares that he slew Hophni and Phinehas, and carried the Ark with his own hands into Dagon's temple. The latter feat would have been no matter of exultation to a Philistine, and the Targum is spurious; but it is interesting, as showing the indelible impress left upon Jewish feeling by the disaster of Aphek.

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* Lyra Apostolia, lvii. We commend the exquisite poem to our readers' notice.

† See Deut. ii., Josh. xi., 2 Sam. xxi. 15, 1 Chron. xx. These passages seem to point to a race of great stature rather than to individual prodigies. See too Smith's 'Dictionary of the Bible'—Article: Giants. The size of the Hebrew cubit is not certain, but Goliath is thought to have been between nine and ten feet.

(v. 12.) And now Israel's champion appears, and we must note the apparent inconsistency with chap. xvi. The difficulty of reconciling the two accounts has caused the omission of 12–31 in some copies of the LXX.—an unspeakable loss to the narrative. Had David been already Saul's 'shield-bearer' (xvi. 21), he would not have been with his sheep at this time. Some critics suppose the two chapters to be written by different persons at some interval of time. The best interpretation is, that the Hebrew narrator almost always goes on to the end of one subject, and then returns to take up some dropped thread. Having spoken of David's harp-playing, he then relates the sequel—his growing popularity and favour with Saul—which covers a considerable time. In an interval of this time, the battle of Ephes-dammim, and all the occurrences of chap. xvii., take place; not till after this exploit does David take regular military service with the King. This agrees with vv. 13, 14, 15; the three elder sons went to battle; David, the minstrel, returned from Saul to Bethlehem (vv. 20–31). We have here particulars of David's dialogue with one and another of the dismayed host, and the outbreak of Eliab's jealous anger in contemptuous rebuke, emphasising the type of Him Whose brethren 'did not believe in Him'; then the set terms of the reward offered, and finally, when the murmured discourse reaches Saul's ears, we have the noble offer of this 'man after God's own heart,' and his grounds of confidence, the same that inspired Jonathan at Michmash, 'The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear,' and the King gives way. The R. V. has a slight difference in v. 34: 'when there came a lion or a bear, I went after him,' etc., thus making it not a single occurrence, but a frequent victory over the wild beasts. It is a picture unparalleled in any earthly warfare; the gigantic warrior, stung into fury by the sight of the agile, boyish form; and yet further that he, in his brazen panoply, should see this stripling throw aside the proffered armour, and choose his five rounded pebbles from the watercourse in the ravine; a curse upon this child's play.† One touch of his finger will crush that tender life—the boy shall be food for the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field. But David returns his defiance a thousand-fold; in the name of Him before Whom the Philistines had trembled, the champion of Israel will give the wild creatures their banquet; but it shall be 'the host of the Philistines,' that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And so the victory was won—a victory of fearless, childlike faith over the extreme of brutal physical force (v. 52). We note the distinction here of Israel and Judah as separate hosts. Shaaraim was a town on the utmost confines of Judah, and the pursuit and slaughter continued even to Gath, the city of the giant, and to Ekron. Verse 54 is another instance of 'anticipation.' Jerusalem was not in existence till years after. David may have transferred thither, with other trophies, the skull of Goliath; for the present he probably placed it with the armour, in the sanctuary of Nob (vv. 55-58). It is quite possible that Saul may not have recognised in David his former harp-player, especially as disease might well confuse his perceptions at the time of David's visits. But, in accordance with his practice, as stated in xiv. 52, Saul takes the victor into his service, and by the ordering of God's Providence, their lives, for good and for evil, are inseparably linked together.

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* The coat of mail in Hebrew is a 'breastplate of scales.' The Phœnicians as well as the Egyptians made their armour in plates like the scales of a crocodile. There are Egyptian specimens in the British Museum.

† David's refusal of the armour as untried is an additional warrant for considering the whole of chap. xvii. as being a kind of parenthesis in chap. xvi.

Chap. xviii. Again, the LXX. omits from v. 55 of the last, to v. 5 of this chapter—there being no break between them, as the Paragraph Bible shows—in order to get rid of the difficulty of Saul's non-recognition, and questioning of Abner. But, as we have seen, we need not suffer the loss of the exquisite passage, telling of Jonathan's noble unselfishness; * neither need we give up the single authorship. For the whole interest is that of a splendid epic or drama, every touch leading up to the catastrophe, every character in statuesque relief, every incident heightening the effect, whether of light or shadow. Jonathan and David go down henceforth through the ages, with their names coupled in that bond of voluntary friendship, which, besides supplying the loveliest element in this present history, carries us on to David's lineal descendant—to Him Who, coming to His own and His own received Him not, still was able, even in the wreck and ruin of our human nature, to sanctify the tie for ever; in that He made and loved and kept a human friend.

(v. 5, to end.) Saul's jealousy soon awakes, and is fanned by the triumph-songs of the chorus at the festival held to commemorate Ephes-dammim. Like all generous characters, David is unsuspicious for a time of Saul's ill-will, or attributes it (v. 10) to the melancholy condition of disease. The promised reward of the King's daughter, which he is too humble to claim, is faithlessly withheld; Merab becomes the wife of Adriel, whose family appear again in the sequel.

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* I am indebted to the Editor for the striking thought, that Jonathan in his loyal devotion to his father yet knew the besetting weakness of his character (how common, alas!)—the jealousy that cannot endure to be surpassed; and that this prevented his acceptance of Goliath's challenge. We know it was not cowardice that held back the hero of Michmash, and this greatly heightens the nobleness of his congratulations to David in the hour of his triumph. Nothing can surpass the beauty of such a character.

But when Saul hears of the romantic love of the younger princess for the hero, he forwards the marriage, hoping to drive David into acts of reckless daring for her sake; 'thou shalt be my son-in-law in the one of the twain'—(R.V. 'a second time'), the first promise being broken. (xix. 1-7.) The King now sinks a stage lower. He tries to involve in his own sin, his servants, his family, even the young wife. Jonathan, thinking it a passing fit of passion, pleads with all the ardour of his loving heart, and prevails for the time. Saul's spirit is, indeed, as 'a city broken down without walls;' swayed like the harp-chords he loves, by every passing breath, responsive to good impulses as well as to evil. (v. 8.) A fresh victory of David stirs him again, and for the third time he attempts to destroy his servant's life; both in the palace and in his own house. Michal's stratagem reminds us of the lingering taint of heathenism among the tribes. 'She took the teraphim' (R. V.), a rudely-carved, domestic idol (like the xoanon of ancient Greece), and with this and a 'covering' (margin) of tawny goat's hair, she eludes the messengers of wrath, while David flies to his companions, the prophets at Ramah. 'Naioth'—a plural word—literally signifies enclosures, and is considered to mean the 'college' or group of buildings in which they lived, near to Samuel's own house. Acting under God's guidance, and probably more fully alive to David's peril than was David himself, as well as far better able to estimate the preciousness of his life, and the issues depending on it—Samuel now takes up his abode also in the Naioth, for greater security. Thither come Saul's emissaries, and three times they are overborne by the genius of the place, and forced to join the 'goodly fellowship' in the majestic presence of Samuel. Then Saul himself comes, and, as he reaches the great well or cistern of Secu (R. V.),* possibly within sight of the house where, hospitably welcomed and entertained when seeking his lost asses, he received the tidings of his high destiny—there sweeps over him a flood of thoughts of that earlier better time. He goes on to Naioth, once his own school; the spirit of the place is upon him, too—he forgets his errand of blood, lays aside his royal robes, and the very thought of his earthly greatness; and as he falls down before the long-estranged guide and friend, in the delirium of his enthusiasm, 'Saul is among the prophets,' he is a Nabi, a mouth-piece of God, once more! And these three thus brought together, Samuel the last Judge, the first of the Prophetic Order—Saul, the first chosen as king, rejected for his sin, yet even thus supplying a type of the envy of Herod and of the Pharisee against our Lord's Person and Ministry—David, closest of all types of the Messiah, unconscious as yet of his own highest destiny, yet learning 'by the things which he suffered'—such was the significance of the meeting at Naioth in Ramah.

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* Probably for storage of water. The Arabs still point to the ruins of such a place, not far from the Prophet's grave, at 'Neby-Samwil,' on the direct path Saul must have taken from Gibeah to Ramah.

(Chap. xx.) David flies back on his own footsteps to seek his friend. There is no possible doubt as to Saul's intentions, and when Jonathan in his filial trust still urges his own ignorance—a touching proof of the love between his father and himself (v. 2)—David avers that to save him from sorrow, the King has purposely kept him in the dark; 'yet as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.' The friends then arrange a plan of deliverance—Jonathan really hoping to prove his father's innocence. Saul's attention to the externals of religion showed itself at the time of feasts; the next day was the new moon,* observed with special sacrifices at which all his officers were expected to be present. David shall remain in hiding, and Jonathan will test the King's intentions, bringing word to the appointed place of meeting (v. 12). The reading of the R.V. seems best. 'The Lord the God of Israel be witness,' etc., and then they fix the *rendezvous* at 'the stone Ezel,' and ratify yet more solemnly the league of friendship between them for ever. All goes as the friends have foreseen; David's vacant place is at once perceived, but Saul passes it over, supposing him to be accidentally disqualified by ceremonial uncleanness from appearing at a religious feast. But on the second day his wrath breaks forth, and he insults Jonathan before the court in the grossest terms; † so that even his noble spirit is roused and stung into 'fierce anger;' he hastens off to warn his friend. It is probable that the hiding-place was either a ruined watch-tower or a cairn; and the signal was to be given by the archer's arrow striking it or going past it. David knows his fate, as the shaft flies past his sheltering wall. He is a fugitive, outcast from wife and friend and home, and as he falls as a vassal before the prince, they mingle their vows with manhood's terrible weeping 'till David exceeded.' A chapter is ended in both their lives as they part for ever on earth. They meet again in the wilderness, but only for a stolen interview; social intercourse is over. But a spirit like that of Jonathan, that 'sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not,' will rest upon God's holy hill when earth's crowns and earth's ambitions have passed away.

(Chap. xxi.) A fresh stage of the history opens here, with David's wanderings. We pause for a moment over a difficulty which sometimes distresses needlessly young Biblical students. Not to speak of other sins, what are we to think of the constant recourse to stratagem and falsehood even by true servants of God? Some proceed, foolishly and thoughtlessly, to deny the Inspiration of writings which narrate such things. We cannot, say they, use the Old Testament as a guide for conduct, therefore it cannot be profitable for our instruction in righteousness. We may remind them that 'warnings' as well as

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* Numb. x. 10; xxviii. 11-15.

† To name a man's parents in disparaging terms is the worst possible insult to an oriental. Dean Stanley has a striking comment (*vide* Lect. xxi.) that Saul may have alluded to some dark passage in the life of Abinoam, or of Rizpah.

'models' are useful. But with Christ's Example, we are not required to copy any other—yet that does not militate against our respect for God's Holy Word. Any reasoning which mars the unity of Scripture defeats God's purpose in giving it. He willed in Scripture to reveal Himself and to show us ourselves; what we were and must remain without Redemption. If there was no record of human imperfection, and we have said* that by Inspiration only could the record have been so faithful, what would the use of the Bible have been? A mere collection of precepts instead of one mighty chain of truth and fact, showing what our nature needed and what it received, the linking of its feebleness to Infinite Strength; the washing of its stain in Infinite Love—in that Incarnation to which every page of this inspired story points us forward. To know man, as he really is without God, is surely the first step to understanding what God designed to do for him. Without the complete Canon of the Old Testament, we could not understand the New. One word as to verbal truth. Different races in east and west have different standards. With a high code of honour *in action*, fidelity to promises and covenants, to the sacredness of hospitality, orientals have never set much store by verbal truth. To tell a lie to save a life would be a credit and not a disgrace in an eastern country; whereas, to cheat a man of his hire, to reveal a secret entrusted, would cover the perpetrator with infamy. The Bible narrative is in this respect a perfectly faithful record; had it been penned by forgers, the reverse would have been very probably the case—they would have recorded what they thought ought to have been said and done, instead of the plain literal facts.

The site of Nob has never been ascertained, but, from other allusions, it must have been on a height not far from Jebus—the future Zion, a little to the north, as it was a city of Benjamin. It is not certain whether Ahi-melech is the same as Ahi-jah of chap. xiv., or whether he is a brother; the probability is in favour of the former theory, the names mean much the same. David had some followers who join him later, so in this respect he spoke truly (v. 2), but Ahi-melech has possibly heard unpleasant rumours, and hesitates for a time, finally giving him all he asks. As they turn from the holy place, David recognises a dark wild face, and misgivings come upon him, but it is too late to draw back. (vv. 10-15.) It may seem strange that he flies to Gath; perhaps it was because, not fearing recognition as the slayer of Goliath, he fancied that a fugitive from Saul's anger would be welcome to Achish. On this hope being disappointed, he feigns madness, so that even those who recognise him, may not think the poor madman worth detaining. (Chap. xxii.) He now reaches the ground already celebrated in Old Testament history, a perfect wilderness (in our day), of limestone hills and cliffs, perforated with large caverns; and in one of these, near the frontier town of Adullam, he gathers about him a band of his own kindred and tribe, who were now probably enduring the weight of Saul's anger, and desiring to retaliate. David's next care is to place his parents under the protection of the King of Moab.* It was the country of their ancestress, Ruth, and Mizpeh (not to be confounded with that named in chap. vii.), is identified as being in Zophim, close to the scene of Balaam's prophecy and to Pisgah, where Moses went home to God. (v. 5.) Warned by the seer Gad, now named for the first time, David flies from Adullam to Hareth, a forest long since disappeared, and thence after a time, he proceeds to Keilah, a frontier town on the Shephelah, exposed to the raids of the Philistines, and here, to his horror and dismay, Abiathar joins him as a homeless fugitive, bearing the terrible tidings of the destruction of Nob. (v. 6.) We are told of Saul's address to his assembled Benjamites, and his words suffice to show how tyrannically he had ruled—as Samuel had predicted—enriching his own tribe at the expense of the rest; and thus accounting for the willingness of the men of Judah to gather round David. He again accuses Jonathan of unfaithful desertion of his father, and appeals to the pity of his own soldiers for their chief; and then the wild Edomite, the son of the desert, comes forward.† He goes beyond the facts, for Ahi-melech had not 'inquired of God,' which would have been an act of rebellion, and when summoned, the priest rightly disclaims it, saying also that he had known nothing of a quarrel between the King and his son-in-law. Then the King's ungovernable passion reaches a height. The cool daring impiety of his command, 'Turn and slay the priests of the Lord,' appals even his rough followers. They have scruples, but Doeg the Edomite has none. This man, the chief herdsman of Saul, is generally thought to be the servant of his early days, who first led him to visit Samuel, and who also commended David to his notice. In his wild and lawless fashion he was faithful to his chief, and it is possible that he regarded the priests with a jealous ill-will, as having influenced his master in putting down heathen practices and witchcraft, and that he was glad to rid the country of them. His conduct is precisely that of a Bedaween of the present day, who would commit any number of murders at a sign from his sheikh. And so the final wreck of Ithamar's house takes place, eighty-five ministers of the tabernacle (with the sole exception of Abiathar), and the women and children of the little settlement, all perish under this hideous order, by the Edomite's relentless hands; and Saul has the curse of Cain, the cry of innocent blood, upon himself and his house, henceforward. In his blind, short-sighted anger, he deprives himself for ever of that royal privilege he affected to prize, he can no more 'inquire of God through His priests.' Abiathar, the sole survivor of the house, seeks and finds protection with David, and in the next chapter we find him saving David from the danger of remaining in Keilah, and being betrayed by the inhabitants, in their terror of such a catastrophe as that of Nob.

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* Introductory Letter in December number of this Magazine.

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* It is the only mention of his mother, who is thought by some commentators to have been of kin to this king of Moab.

† Psalm lii. should be read (see R. V.). It throws light on Doeg's position and influence.

(xxiii. 13.) David, now at the head of a band, wanders forth again—'whithersoever they could go.'* Although the forests exist no longer, there is no part of Palestine where the localities can be better ascertained, as given us in the marvellously picturesque narration which follows. A good map will show the positions of Ziph, Carmel, and Maon, all upon heights on a line with each other, on the high country (one mass of mountains) lying between the Philistine border-lands and the valley of the Dead Sea. (v. 16.) Here Jonathan made a hurried visit to his friend, 'and strengthened his hand in God,' showing by his speech on this occasion that he had fully accepted the fact of David's future supremacy. We may believe that Jonathan's fidelity to his oath would have stood every test, though God willed to remove him by a soldier's gallant death from the insuperable difficulties which must otherwise have encumbered both friends on David's accession. (v. 19 to end.) The Ziphites' invitation to Saul is to 'come down' through the rocky 'wadys' to the lower ground of Maon, south of the 'desert' (R. V. v. 19). Jeshimon is not a proper name, but a descriptive term for any rough and waste land. David and his men take up a position of strength among the rocks. There are several hills that perfectly correspond with the description, and here the fugitives are all but surprised; Saul going round the rocks on one side, and David and his troop on the other. A sudden alarm—easily given from the surrounding heights—that the Philistines are mustering upon the western slopes for an attack, draws off Saul's attention from this 'rock of divisions;' but David, warned by this evidently hair-breadth escape, crosses the heights, and descending the precipitous eastern cliffs that overhang the deep trough of the Dead Sea, remains in the strongholds of Engedi, halfway up its western shore. (xxiv.) Many travellers have agreed in placing the story which follows at Ain-Djedy, 'the fountain of the kid;' and identifying it with 'Hazezon-Tamar,' 'the well of palm-trees,' in Gen. xiv. 7. Among precipices, where a false step is certain death, where the limestone terraces are perforated with caverns, many of them large enough to shelter a host—in the midst of this country (now, in our own day, visited with great risk, from the hordes of robbers infesting these caves)—Saul now threads his difficult march over 'the rocks of the wild goats,' where the ibex and the chamois play. Seeking shelter in one of these caves, he unwittingly finds himself in the same cavern which, deep in its innermost recesses, shelters David. It probably had more than one entrance, so that David, who had difficulty in restraining his companions (v. 7) from attacking the King, was able to withdraw them without attracting notice. (vv. 9-15.) The beautiful address which he makes to the King is a last appeal to the generosity and good feeling of the master he had loved, the father of his wife and of his friend. He probably stood on the brink of the ravine, within sight and hearing of Saul, trusting to his knowledge of the cliffs for escape, in case his appeal should fail. His whole speech reminds us of the language of the Psalms; he asks Saul why he has suffered evil tongues of mischief-makers to poison his mind—shows him how completely his life lay at the mercy of the man he had falsely imagined to be his enemy, but who has ever been his son and faithful servant—and the King's better nature responds to the passionate, heart-stirring tones (v. 16): 'Is this thy voice, my son David?' and tears burst forth as he becomes conscious of the peril he has escaped—of the injustice, as well as the cruelty, of his own conduct; nay, he shows how, in the depth of his heart, he has accepted the fact that the kingdom shall be David's, by the will and the appointment of God, as foretold him by Samuel. It is noteworthy how Saul exacts from David the same oath as that which he had already sworn to Jonathan, showing the strong Israelite feeling against the perishing of 'a name' from among its tribesmen.

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* It is impossible in our limits to do more than allude, in passing, to the Psalms. But, to students, nothing is more helpful than to read those to which commentators assign dates, as written by him in different parts of his life. In his shepherd days, viii., xix., xxiii., xxix., cli.; at his escape, vi., vii., lix., lvi., xxxiv.; in his wanderings, lii., xl., liv., lvii., lxiii., cxlii., xviii.

Chap. xxv. opens with the briefest possible statement of Samuel's death, of the great public mourning,* and of his burial in his house at Ramah. Yes, at the house where, after Shiloh's fall, he had judged Israel; where he received and anointed the first king with a loyal affection which we may measure by the depth of his subsequent grief; whence, at God's command, he went to 'choose David from among the sheep-folds, and anoint him with the holy oil.' A second Moses in his devotion, patriotism, and unselfishness; like him, raised by God to bear His Israel through a terrible crisis in their history; now Samuel rests from his labours, unlike in this to Moses, that he lies among his people, and his sepulchre exists among Israel's ruined shrines.† And yet one more parallel. Moses and Samuel have both to leave their Sheol, to pass death's awful confines, and stand once more upon this earth; the one to emphasise a message of doom, but the other, after long ages, to speak of 'the decease to be accomplished at Jerusalem,' by which should be manifested the oneness of God's purpose of mercy, not only to Abraham's children, but, through them, to a redeemed world. We are not told whether Saul joined in the funeral rites, nor how the

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* Mentioned by Josephus, as being observed with the greatest possible solemnity.

† There is no reasonable doubt that in Neby-Samwil, still venerated by the Arabs, we have the true site of the Prophet's tomb.

Prophet's death affected him. David left his rocky stronghold, but it is probable that 'Paran' is a copyist's error for Maon. Paran lay far southwards, and the story which follows is placed in Maon, a district partly savage and partly fertile. Carmel, which of course must not be confounded with the mountain-range north-west of Jezreel, means literally 'a fruitful field.' Here we find a descendant of Caleb, one of the rich pastoral 'princes,' with large flocks and a retinue of servants. David and his band have, so far from injuring, protected his property, as his own servants testify (vv. 15, 16) when, indignant at the harsh, insulting conduct of their master, they tell the whole to the beautiful Abigail, hoping that she may avert the danger threatening her husband. Provision being already made for the great sheep-shearing feast—which made Nabal's churlish inhospitality still more revolting—Abigail sets forth, unknown to her husband, on a true peace-maker's errand, carrying a bountiful supply to the host in the wilderness. There are indications, both here and elsewhere, that by this time David's future accession to the kingdom was generally believed in. Abigail's action, therefore, was that of a dutiful and loyal subject to a king. In addressing David, she deprecates his anger, lays her tribute before him, and intercedes, as if in a royal presence, that the 'folly' of Nabal—the name signifies a fool—may be pardoned (vv. 27-31). If her language seems servile, we must remember it would not be so in an Oriental. Her words have almost the force of prophecy, and it is evident that in David she recognises a man appointed of God to a high destiny; and that this constitutes, in her eyes, the sin of Nabal's conduct. David's response is given with all the warmth of his generous nature. He blesses God for sending her to prevent him from doing violence, and her for her advice—better expressed in the R. V. by 'wisdom'—and Abigail returns to see her husband, stricken by fatal disease after his drunken debauch, die by the hand of the Lord, making David rejoice still further in his own providential escape from committing any deed of violence. Michal, his first wife, has been given to another husband by her father; Ahinoam of Jezreel must have become David's second wife about this time, as she was the mother of Amnon, the eldest of his large family. By his marriage with Abigail he now begins that institution which accompanies Eastern royalty, the harem life which in his own family was to be productive of so much evil, and which had hitherto been unknown to the Jews.

(Chap. xxvi.) Some commentators doubt whether this is a second occurrence, or a different account of the scene in chap. xxiv. No doctrine is involved, and the localities are so different, there is sufficient warrant for those who prefer keeping the two distinct. Hachilah is one of the heights adjoining Hebron, while Engedi is a precipice on the Dead Sea, one on the western, the other on the eastern slope, of the mountain-mass of Judah. Neither horse nor waggon could have reached the cliffs of Engedi.

David's words (xxvi. 19) require special notice. There is a touching change from the sarcastic taunt to his old captain to the despairing wail, wrung from a heart charged to bursting, as he thinks of this protracted injustice, and the inevitable consequence. His desert strongholds are becoming untenable, his hiding-places 'discovered, his only safety will be in flight to Saul's enemies, who will shelter Saul's rival. He adjures the King—if his hatred be merely the work of the 'evil spirit' of old days, and therefore of the nature of a visitation from God, to let prayer and sacrifice be the means of restoring him to his better self. But, if this be the work of evil tongues, and Doeg's mischief lay heavy on his soul, 'cursed be they.' Why? 'For they have driven me out this day that I should not cleave unto the inheritance of the Lord, saying, "Go, serve other gods."' Much of David's character is in this one verse. All through the Psalms he shows the peculiar horror of all generous hearts at the 'arrows of bitter words'—wounds made in a neighbour's absence by detraction—slander. Truly God's curse rests upon the sin! Again, he is God's true servant; he fears that, dwelling among the heathen, he may swerve from true worship. His ancestress' words on coming to her adopted country: 'Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God'—was he to reverse them in his bitter exile? Even Saul is moved for the time to fitful penitence. But comparing his fervour with that of David is like comparing a 'Will-o'-the-Wisp' with the scintillations of a star.

Despairing of a better state of feelings in Saul, he changes his life from this point, leaving the wilderness, and returning to his alliance with Achish, who appoints Ziklag as his asylum (v. 7 to end). A painful episode follows, in which we need not attempt to defend David. His going to seek refuge with his country's enemies, his leaving the wilderness where at least he had God's protection, may indeed be regarded as an eclipse of faith, bringing its own punishment. In order to avoid going against his own people, he had to employ subterfuge, and possibly his predatory expeditions were necessary for his subsistence, with his increasing household and band of dependants. But in his raid against various allies of the Philistines, the cruel slaughter (v. 9) was wantonly made to deceive Achish, who hoped now to bind this valiant warrior to his service, in the new expedition he was planning against the foe who had resisted him so long.

In order to give a clearer view of the sequence of events in the closing chapters of this Book, we propose to deal now with xxix., xxx., returning again to consider xxviii. in connection with xxxi., as they are certainly consecutive in time. We are told (xxvii. 7) that David remained sixteen months in Philistia; the events of that period fill two chapters. (xxix. 1.) It is probable that this is the Aphek formerly mentioned, and that, although driven from the country and defeated, the Philistines had still been able to hold it, with some other of their hill-forts, even after the rout at Michmash. The expedition, for which preparations are now on foot, evidently occupies some time, and is considered of unusual importance; and the lords go up by hundreds and thousands to the gathering-place; but the Israelitish position is unusual, as we shall see presently. Achish has by this time conceived a strong liking and admiration for the hero of Israel, and is so assured that David has cast off his ungrateful King and country, that he is willing entirely to trust him as a leader and companion-in-arms. But the Philistine-chiefs either see more accurately or are less blinded by partiality. The words of the old triumph-song still haunt and sting them, and they believe David's present conduct to spring from a treacherous desire to purchase reconciliation with his father-in-law by betraying his allies in the hour of battle. His victory at Ephes-dammim and his marriage are strong in their recollection, and, in spite of his own remonstrance, and the urgent wishes of Achish, he is ordered to depart southwards, while the Philistines press on to Jezreel. Some commentators think he was really glad to be spared the expedition against his country, as there was no cowardice on his own part. (Chap. xxx.) On reaching Ziklag, after three days' absence, David finds that a raid of the Amalekites has made his home desolate; the city is burnt, and the women and children carried into captivity. Here we see that throughout his wanderings and his dwelling among heathen, he still has the support of Abiathar's presence, and now he seeks counsel by the Urim and Thummim, and is bidden to go in pursuit of the spoilers. Besor, i.e. 'stream of good tidings,' is thought to be identical with a brook in the Wady Sheriah, which enters the sea near Gaza. It is some help to travellers in fixing the site of Ziklag, of which all trace has disappeared. A young Egyptian slave, whom they find left to perish in the desert, gives them information by which they surprise the camp of the marauders in the midst of their wild merriment. We get some details of the outrage from this rescued Egyptian; it seems to have been directed against the outlying towns of Judah as well as against the Philistines, of whom the Cherethites were a tribe (vv. 11–15).* There follows a striking instance of David's equity and justice—qualities not always to be met with side by side with enthusiastic generosity like his—in his absolute insistance on a righteous division of the spoil: 'He that goeth down to battle, and he that tarrieth by the stuff, they shall part alike.' It was not merely a passing act of justice, but the assertion of a right principle, and such it was thenceforth regarded (v. 25). The presents sent to the elders of Judah are again a testimony to his perfect uprightness; it is evident (v. 31) that these were the places whence he and his band had received sustenance and help during their hard exile in the wilderness. David, no doubt, was glad to show his countrymen that he was still true in heart to his country and his God, as he speaks of sending them 'of the spoil of the enemies of the Lord' (v. 26).

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* They are mentioned with the Philistines in Zeph. ii. 5.

And now we revert to chap. xxviii. On no stage, ancient or modern, has a poet's fancy produced a more splendid drama than the life of Saul, and here wè reach the awful climax of the tragedy. The Philistines now make a great combined movement to the northward, taking up their position at Shunem. Here we must ask our readers to pause and study carefully with the map the Plain of Esdraelon.* It is the great battle-plain of Palestine, dividing it transversely into two halves. There most of the great pitched battles were fought; but, let it be observed, the Israelites always preferred carrying on their warfare among hills, and probably the Philistines purposely gathered in Esdraelon, that their great superiority in chariot-warfare might overwhelm the lesser forces of Saul. The rough hills of Manasseh skirt the south-western boundary of this plain; and, to the north-west, it runs up into the ridge-like backbone of the northern Carmel with its remarkable promontory. North of Esdraelon, the hills rise again, with little intermission, till they blend with the spurs of Lebanon and the snowy Hermon. This plain has deep bays or indentations, as the map will show, running up into the hills; in some of these are wells and fountains fed from the neighbouring heights, which have often helped travellers to identify this interesting country, where so large a portion of the Old Testament History has taken place. In its whole extent the Plain is watered by the Kishon and its tributary-streams, fed by the springs from the hills. Shunem lay in one of these bays, on the southern side of Mount Moreh, north of Jezreel, which was situated in the plain on the northern side of Mount Gilboa, which here divides Esdraelon from the Jordan Valley. (v. 3.) This reverting of the narrative to Samuel's death and burial, is intended to supply the motive for what follows. Saul and his men-at-arms, as they look afar from Gilboa across the plain, can see the gathering multitude, the glittering armour, the rolling chariots of their relentless foes. No stratagem, no daring adventure as at Michmash, no personal encounter like that of Ephes-dammim, will save Israel here; a pitched battle in the open plain, that is the present requirement, and 'the King greatly trembled.' He stands just above the place where Gideon lay with his little host, hard by the 'well of Harod' (Judges vii. 1), 'the spring of trembling.' He has 'enquired of the Lord,' but the Lord answered him not, how should He do so? He has slain God's priests with the sword; Nob lies behind him in its ruins. The only survivor is with his rival, and has borne the ephod into the strangers' land. He has cast out from his family and his heart the fearless champion before whom Goliath fell and the Philistines fled, and now, the voice that called him to rule over Israel, that once spoke to him in counsel and instruction and loving rebuke, that mourned and wept unto God for him, that voice is silent in death. What shall he do in this hour of deadly peril? We may measure Saul's despair by the terrible action which follows. We are never actually told in Scripture of his extirpation of witchcraft, but there can be little doubt that it took place in the early part of his reign, in that interval already alluded to, between his solemn unction and the events of chap. xiii. At that time we may well believe that the eager impulsiveness of his character showed itself in acts of fiery, perhaps even intemperate religious zeal; and that Samuel, who had all the influence over him which a self-restrained nature has over an unchastened one, alludes to this particular action in xvi. 23; warning the King of that perverse wilfulness in—so-called—small matters, which was his besetting sin and his ruin. And now (v. 7) the order comes from Saul himself. His servants are bidden to find him 'a woman with a familiar spirit.' It might strike us as strange that there is no sign of remonstrance or of hesitation, they do not seem to be afraid, as in the case of slaying the priests. Tradition says the two specially consulted were Abner and Amasa, and this is borne out by the ease with which these two familiar friends and kinsmen point out the means of gratifying the King's desire. The same tradition declares the Witch of Endor to have been Abner's mother, which would be an obvious reason for her having escaped the King's severe enactments, being protected and sheltered in her retreat by powerful kinsmen. Saul, it is evident, does not consult his loyal, faithful son. How can he do so? Jonathan's counsel would be, as he knows well enough, to send for David and his men of Judah, and trust humbly and fearlessly to the God of their fathers, who had vanquished Jabin and his iron chariots upon the banks of Kishon, on that very plain of Esdraelon where Israel's ruin had formerly been planned by foes as warlike and as strong as the hosts of Achish. Young students should be especially careful how they regard the closing acts of Saul's career. There is something so truly awful in the picturesqueness of the narration, something so pathetic in the despair which tries to overleap the most terrible of all barriers, to wring an answer from the further side of the gates of death, that many are tempted to pass lightly over, nay even to sympathise with, the daring impiety of the whole transaction. Many—especially if they are classical scholars—try to regard Saul at this point as the heathen often viewed their tragic heroes, i.e. as a Fate-driven man, scarcely responsible for his actions. But there is no 'Fate,' in the heathen sense, to those who know the true God. 'What a man soweth, that shall he reap.' When Saul inquired of the Lord, and the Lord answered him not, it was merely his own hardness and impenitence, his own want of correspondence with grace and light already vouchsafed, that had gradually brought him to the terrible crisis we are considering now. Can any of us suppose that one act of true self-humiliation, one fervent confession of past sin, would not have been of more use in clearing his eyes to his future path than this fresh breach of God's law in applying to the Witch of Endor.

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* 'Sinai and Palestine,' chap. ix., with map, and Lect. xxi., 'Jewish Church.' Dean Stanley remarks on the likeness to the Scottish battle-field of Stirling, lying between the Highlands and Lowlands, where Scotland's greatest battles have been fought.

There is probaby no subject, not involving any doctrine, which has been so widely disputed as the amount of supernatural power possessed by diviners, wizards, and the like. It is certain that they exercised enormous influence, especially the class called 'necromancers,' or speakers with the dead. The very severe penal laws given through Moses (*vide* Deut. xviii. and parallel passages) were of course owing to the connection of all these practices with idolatry.* To consult a diviner for guidance was to depart from God, therefore we find Saul condemned (1 Chron. x. 14) for 'not inquiring' of the Lord. And now he rushes upon his ruin, disguising himself, and taking the two only who were confidants of his guilty secret. They have to run a terrible risk, in their walk across eight or nine miles of rough hill-country, from Gilboa to En-Dor—the 'habitation of the spring.' It is by a beautiful fountain, deep in one of the bays or wadys of the Little Hermon, a detached hill which stands forward into the plain, and on and around this hill lies the Philistine host, drawn up right in front of Gilboa, ready to attack Israel on the next day. Through the darkness of a moonless Oriental night, Saul and his attendants go, whether directly over or cautiously skirting, the rocky ridge, we know not; but they reach En-Dor, once the scene of Sisera's downfall, in a recess of the mountain opposite Tabor. There is a calm grandeur about the sorceress herself, and an absence of surprise, as if she was used to midnight visitations of this kind, though she requires a pledge for her own immunity from punishment, which Saul gives with his usual vehemence (vv. 11, 12). What follows is very singular. As far as we can tell by the narrative, there is scarcely any time for incantation, her cry of affright is caused by the apparition, and her consequent conviction that Saul himself is her midnight visitor. Possibly she suspected it from the first, especially if Abner was his conductor; but the prompt appearance of him he sought, makes her certain of the King's identity;† and judging by the Scripture words, her terror is caused by Saul's presence, and her dread of the penalties of the law. Whether, however, we regard her as a self-deceiver, or as one really in contact with mysterious unseen powers, let us pause over the scene. There stands the sorceress, startled at the sight of this august presence—

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* It would be beyond our present limits to discuss whether the Witch of Endor was an impostor. I myself believe she was able to call up spirits, but not those she summoned; she could not compel them to come, but she had a certain amount of power.

† I confess I think the woman's fear was of Saul—not of the apparition, as some critics have said.

like a 'god' (Elohim, the plural, is probably a copyist's error). There are the trembling followers, there is King Saul, bending in awe before the majestic shade, wrapped in the well-remembered mantle. Saul has his wish, and they begin their awful dialogue (v. 15): 'Why hast thou disquieted me?' and in reply, the King pours forth his despair: God is departed from him, it is absolute necessity that makes him thus violate the sanctity of that place where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. The reply convicts him out of his own mouth. 'Wherefore then, dost thou ask of me? If God is your enemy, as you say, how can my counsel avail you? What help, what hope, can remain for any created being in the heaven above or the depths beneath, whose confidence is based upon anything, save God only?' Point by point the prophet reminds the King of the warnings and threatenings, any one of which, received in a humble spirit, might at least have availed to alleviate the punishment; now it is too late, as far as this world is concerned, 'to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me.' Yes, on the very ground hallowed by so many of the victories won in the power and might of the Lord of Hosts—Israel shall suffer this humiliating defeat, together with the loss of the King they had so desired to be their leader in battle. Saul has his answer—what is it worth? Like a desperate gambler, he has risked all on a fearful cast and lost it. He evidently has cherished a vague hope, that if he can but awake the tones of that loved and honoured voice, there may yet be guidance and comfort even in this extremity. But Samuel only repeats what he said in life, with one fatal addition. Now, weary, fasting, wrought to the highest pitch human nerves can endure, body and spirit give way; the splendidly-knit frame falls all its mighty length upon the earth. Saul has the gift of inspiring warm attachment in his followers; the care bestowed is very touching. The woman reminds him that she has risked all to do his bidding, and only asks that he will accept her hospitality. And so the three warriors take their perilous road across the enemy's line once more.

This is a unique scene in Holy Writ, and doubtless there are many who think, that be its teaching what it may, it cannot be brought to bear upon themselves. But is it so? Surely its lesson is embodied in St. Luke, xvi. 31; and in the words of our Prayer-Book, 'cursed is he that taketh man for his defence and in his heart goeth from the Lord.' God the Holy Ghost has willed therefore, under both the Old and the New Covenants, to show us the utter uselessness of seeking counsel or guidance from beyond the grave. In what we call the darkest times, there has always been light enough for those who will seek it aright, in His blessed Word. If any reject that, as Saul did, as those do who disintegrate and dishonour the Scriptures, they could learn nothing further, even 'though one rose from the dead.' (Chap. xxxi.) From Endor, Saul went straight to his death. Josephus and other Jewish writers praise highly the patriotic daring with which he at once rushed into battle.* The Philistines next day made their furious onslaught, dislodging the Israelites from their position at Jezreel, and driving them up the difficult and rocky face of Gilboa; on the high table-land of which the great slaughter seems to have taken place. With the three princes lying slain before him, under the deadly showers of Philistine arrows, Saul knows his hour is come. He dreads, as he well may, the cruelties and indignities which await him if taken a living captive; but whether he dies of his own act (v. 5), or at his own request by an alien hand, we cannot be certain. A large tract of Esdraelon and the neighbouring hill-towns become the spoil of the enemy, who, with their usual barbarity, strip and dishonour the bodies of the dead, fastening the limbs of their royal victims to the walls of Beth-shean. One touch of relief is given to the dark tragedy, by the heroism of the men of Jabesh-Gilead. They remember Saul's valiant and generous rescue of their city from Ammon. So they make a midnight raid across the deep trough of the Jordan Valley, up and over the rugged heights to Beth-Shean. There they reverently gather the relics, bring them to Jabesh, and after burning them, give royal burial and mourning to the mighty dead, 'under the tamarisk-tree in Jabesh.' He gave them freedom, they gave him a grave.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

Questions for March.

21. Describe the interview between Saul and David in chap. xxvi. with special note of the localities.

22. Write a note on the Plain of Esdraelon.

23. 1. Mizpeh of Moab; 2. Sela-hammah-lekoth; 3. Carmel; 4. Hareth; 5. Maon; 6. Ezel; 7. Ziklag; 8. Adullam; 9. Besor. Give the context in which each of these names occurs.

24. Give the position of both armies at Ephes-dammim; and say why the Revised Version describes it more clearly than the Authorised.

25. Give David's words, when Saul tried to dissuade him from single combat with Goliath; noting the difference between the R. V. and A. V.

26. From chaps. xv.–xxxi., give any instances you can of Messianic teaching: i.e. of the events or principal characters foreshadowing the life and ministry of Our Lord.

27. State all you can of Doeg the Edomite, and his actions.

28. Note the downward stages of Saul's declension, and the points

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* Dean Stanley speaks of this, and of the enthusiasm his character inspired into his followers (*vide* Lect. xxi.).

at which (judging by the Scripture narrative) he might have returned to God.

29. Write a short account of the transaction at En-Dor, and say what special lessons we should draw from it.

30. Write a sketch of David's wanderings; *or*, a brief essay on the character of Jonathan.

Answers to be sent not later than April 2nd, to Miss L. Dundas, 37, Manor Place, Edinburgh. The writer's real name and address, as well as the *nom de plume*, to be written distinctly on each page; the latter only will be published. Books may be consulted at pleasure before beginning to write; but *all* books and notes should be put aside when the writing begins. Any competitor who has found it absolutely necessary to refer to book in composing an answer, should mention having done so on her paper.

Class List for January.

Class I.

Bubbles	95	Celestine	86	Pyrethrum	76
Verena	89	Anonyma	80	Ariel	
Elphin	88	Breidden	79	Winifred	75
Gretta		Gladiola	78	Rese Marie	
Elphis	87	Water Wagtail	77		

Class II.

Lily	74	Juno	71	Carlotta	65
Iza		Ellen	70	Lady Bettina	64
Lucilla	73	Hypatia		Daisy	
Excelsior		Gwen	69	Atalanta	
Constantine	72	Lancelot	68	Spectacles	58
Aconite	71	Joiner	67	Penholder	52
Brown Bess		Sparrow	66	Firefly	51
Ina					

DEBATABLE GROUND.

Is thought-reading, as an amusement, harmful and injudicious?

All the debaters, with one exception, have answered this question in the affirmative. *Semibreve* only, disbelieves so entirely in any result, as to consider the 'amusement' merely silly.

Bildad puts it on a par with 'table-turning, spirit-rapping,' etc., thinks the idea of such a power 'must be puzzling and maddening in the extreme' to young people, thinks it contradicts the truth that there is only One who can read the heart, and that it would 'allow people to think there was a mysterious connection between mind and mind.'

Taffy thinks it 'borders upon superstition,' and 'is too great an assumption of power for any human being.'

Grey Squirrel objects on the ground of danger to health and nerves by 'evolving an abnormal brain-state,' likely to produce mental disease. Chelsea China does not quite see whether, by the expression 'misuse of the most valuable power given to man,' she means that *all* thought-reading is such a misuse, or that boys and girls will probably misuse it if they make the attempt.

C. E. L. gives a strong warning, based on experience, on the ground of health, and also considers that 'the agnosticism of the present age avenges itself in the hungering and thirsting after knowledge which the Almighty, for His own wise purposes, has kept secret.'

Dabricia's paper is given whole, as showing, in an interesting way, the sort of double view, half a trick and half a spiritual mystery, which it seems to Chelsea China that many people hold on the subject, and *Lucciola's*, as going into the question by far the most deeply, and putting forward a view which must be regarded with the most reverent interest.

Dabricia.—I suppose that the mania for 'thought-reading,' as an amusement, is a flickering up of that old candle of superstition which is by some fondly believed to have died out from among us. Of course I know that the phenomenon is explicable in the most matter-of-fact and practical way, and so, no doubt, does every one who ever helps to produce it. But still, that does not alter the fact that, to most people, even against the testimony of their knowledge, it *is* a phenomenon, and one whose attraction lies in its mystery, as brought about by some apparently superhuman agency. To ordinary people the explanations that sound so satisfactory are as mysterious really as the thing explained; they say and think they understand, but underneath is a vague feeling that it is all very wonderful, and that each successful 'reading' that they witness is little short of a special miracle. Now a little superstition is a very good thing, and we should doubtless have profited had our forefathers left a little of their abundance to us; but it is certainly absolutely useless unless it serves some moral end; and what such end is to be evolved out of 'thought-reading?'

Then 'thought-reading' is classed, in conversation and in most minds, with things that I suppose no sensible person would call 'judicious,' at least, such as what is called spiritualism, hypnotism, and other attempts at plunging into knowledge of the unknown in our natures. Interest in one is only too inclined to lead to interest in the other.

Truly, we are 'fearfully and wonderfully made.'

There are strange depths and unexplored stretches in our nature which are as yet beyond the reach of the strictest self-examination or the most deeply-searching philosophy. It is most natural that when this truth is brought home to the human mind, a longing to probe as far as may be should arise, and any means which seems to promise an insight into the dark secret should be eagerly embraced. But is it wise to play on the borders of the strange land, to experimentalise as though the elements of our being were but so many chemicals, in watching the various actions of which in different combinations we may find an hour's profitable amusement? I cannot think that it is either wise or advisable; and though 'thought-reading' may be physically explained in itself, yet it leads to other things which may not be so explained; and even if we confine ourselves to it and go no further, the unconfessed sense of mystery may teach us that we shall assuredly injure that mysterious spirit which dwells within us if we play with such things, and use them for an evening's amusement.

Lucciola.—Many join in this, I doubt not, without a thought of danger or of sin; still I cannot think it harmless. The most superficial observer can see, that we have reached a very wonderful stage of earth's history—one that has no parallel in the past. It is not an age of only 'seeming wonders,' but one of wonderful facts. The chief marvel is, that Religion and Science, long erroneously supposed to be antagonistic, at best parallel, are converging, and Faith can see, though in the far distance, some of their meeting-points. The noblest scientific minds are owning, that to reach a truth by Revelation is mounting by wings; to reach it by Science is going up a staircase, but the 'points reached' *are the same.* Of course there are heights Science probably has not time to scale, before the Change when knowledge, which is 'in part,' shall be done away; but the further real discovery goes, the more remarkable will its convergence with Revelation be. As man is God's crowning act of Creation, it is natural that the most startling group of discoveries is that which touches our human selves; e.g. biology, psycho-physics, and all that tends to show the connection and affinity between ourselves and our fellows: 'striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound.' 'Thought-reading,' so-called, 'is certainly one of this group. Science, in these matters, is in its infancy, but judging by analogy, there is probability of its further advance. It is possibly destined to read us some momentous lessons in the future. As I heard it ably put—not long since—in a noble Advent sermon on the Judgment; some of these wonders may possibly be intended, when more clearly understood, to shadow forth for us—through a glass, darkly, indeed! the awful enigma, *how* the Past shall rise and confront us in The Day. Our thoughts to be read, by men and angels; our words (for sound is indestructible like matter) to echo back, and syllable themselves with airy tongue again; our deeds, to show their unmistakable effects written in our very flesh and blood.

Some of us are old enough to recollect the time when people ran after mesmerism, electro-biology, even chloroform, as mere playthings; curiosity is satiated on these points, and fashion has changed, but not till some had learnt that health and even life had been risked in playing with forces they could not control. Each step that Science plants, truly and firmly, must lead nearer to Revealed Truth, for Truth, like its God and Maker, is One. But can it ever be harmless play to meddle lightly with any of the half-developed scientific truths that concern the welding of body, soul, and spirit in that trinity of our being, which God has planned as the earthly symbol of Himself? Where no purpose can be served or is even sought except amusement, can we not find safer means? Scotch cottage-mothers, when they see 'the bairns' with dangerous implements in their unskilled little hands, quote, as they seize upon the ill-chosen plaything, the good Scots proverb: 'Fules sudna ha'e chappin-sticks.' Perhaps some will agree that the sentiment is not inapposite in the present case.

Chelsea China puts forward her own view with diffidence. She does think 'thought-reading, *as an amusement*,' generally 'injudicious' and sometimes 'harmful;' but she does not think it at all *sinful*. It makes no such assumption as 'spiritualism,' and in her opinion has no flavour of the 'black art' about it at all. If such a power as 'thought transference' does exist, it is as natural and scientific as thinking, and if so regarded, *some* of its harmfulness disappears.

A galvanic battery, or a combination of chemicals, is very dangerous in unskilful hands, and would injure ignorant young people; but it is not wicked. There is this difference, that the galvanic battery is understood by some people; the power of 'thought transference' probably at present is thoroughly understood by nobody.

Chelsea China objects to such experiments among young people or in mixed society:

1. Because they frighten people and upset their nerves.
2. Because they certainly do tempt people to play tricks and tell falsehoods.

These two objections, on Chelsea China's view of the matter, would be greatly minimized.

3. That *real* injury might be done to brain and nerves by the ignorant use of a power connected with them.

Chelsea China therefore certainly considers 'thought-reading,' as an alternative from charades, for instance, injudicious.

But that people of sufficient age and mental development, who understand themselves and each other, should help to investigate first the existence, and secondly the mode of working, of a scientific force which appears to be in course of discovery, is another thing altogether, and Chelsea China cannot regard it as presumptuous or profane to make the attempt. Rather, in view of the splendid possibilities indicated by *Lucciola*, it is only right that it should be done.

Chelsea China does not wish to be understood as offering any opinion as to whether such investigations would prove or disprove the existence of such a natural power.

Chelsea China has received several more papers on the two contrasted mottoes. *F. L. C.*, *Post Meridian* (who speaks up for the 'bird in the hand'), *V. E. B.*, and *Bessemer*. They are all very well written, but do not add any fresh ideas to those already printed. Indeed, there is not very much fresh to say on the subject, as each proverb, after all, only suggests one idea. *Beta*, whose paper was omitted last time for want of space, starts a point of view which had occurred to Chelsea China herself, the bearing of the proverbs on national life, and on various undertakings.

Her paper is therefore now inserted.

Is 'A bird in hand worth two in the bush,' or 'Nothing venture, nothing have,' the best motto? I suppose the best motto is that which leads ultimately to the highest life, so that, notwithstanding many unanswerable arguments which might be brought forth in favour of the motto, 'A bird in hand is worth two in the bush,' the one which appears to me most useful and therefore the best, is, 'Nothing venture, nothing have.'

The three particular ways in which this latter motto strikes me, are in reference to: (1) National Life; (2) Official Life; (3) Social Life.

1. Regarding national life. Surely when we take a brief retrospect of the history of England, our ancestors' practical adaptation of this proverb to their own actions, meets with our full and hearty approval, though, possibly, we may secretly feel that a little more charity would not have been amiss. Where, we may ask, would have been our present flourishing colonies if our forefathers had not carried this principle into general use?

And nowadays one often wishes a little more courage and a little caution were manifested in our national dealings.

2. Official life, by which I mean those who have the management of various societies, schools, etc. How often one hears the following remark, 'We have done very well before, without changes, and we do not need them now,' which is equivalent in my mind to 'A bird in hand,' etc.

This is a question which must be faced sooner or later, is it not our duty to make new ventures, for the benefit of the certain work we have in hand and of those who succeed us in our work? e.g. the management of a particular society may need overhauling and thorough renovation, ought we, for fear of losing our 'one bird, decline to overhaul our work, or try the new system? We may rest assured that 'ventures' will have to be made, whether by ourselves or others is the question.

3. The social point of view is decidedly a problem, and wisdom will certainly be required in any society 'ventures.' We are most of us so trammelled by what 'Mother Grundy' thinks, that we dare not do anything original. And yet how much greater admiration we have for any one who strikes out into quite unfrequented paths, or, in other words, makes 'new ventures,' than for one who is always prudently considering how far she can safely go, without endangering her one precious 'bird.' What the special 'ventures' each one could make depend upon the character and circumstances of the individual, but that, where possible, they should be made, must be evident to all. BETA.

QUESTION FOR FEBRUARY.

Is agreement of belief and opinion necessary to a close friendship. (Suggested by *Double Daisy.*)

Answers to be sent to Chelsea China, care of the Publishers, before March 1st.

CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY.

THE RISE OF ISLÂM.

Questions for March.

9. A short life of Mahomet.

10. The main good and bad points of Islâm, adding the good and harm it has wrought towards Christendom.

11. What countries had fallen under Mahometan rule within a century of the Hegira? Mark what Churches were swept away, and which survived, as it were, in captivity, giving Scripture prophecy thus fulfilled.

12. Give short notes on: the Kaaba—the Mahometan year and its chief fast—Pilgrimage—the Koran.

Answers to sent to Bog-Oak, care of the Publishers, by April 1st.

Useful books for those who have access to them, *Mahomet and his Successors*, by Washington Irving (Bohn's Standard Library); Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Book IV., Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, chaps. l., li.; Miss Yonge's *Landmarks of Ancient History*, chap. xvii.

December Class List.

First Class.

Etheldreda	38	Sycorax	35	Bluebell	32
Cocksmoor.	37	Verena	34	Ierne	
Polypodium	36	Vorwärts	33	Violets	
Kentigern	35	Malacoda		Λαμβδα	
Water Wagtail		De Maura		Andromache	
Papaver		Firenze		Speranza	30

Second Class.

Charissa	29	Hegesippus	28	Καθολικος	25
Countess		Erica	27	Portia	24
Veritas		Decima		Box	22
		Fidelia			

Third Class.

Trudel 13

Final Class List.

Bog-Oak remarks with pleasure that the Prize-winners have surpassed themselves, for the Prizes are gained by higher marks than last year. And the smaller number of Members have worked more steadily.

First Class.

Minimum 360.

First Prize.

*Etheldreda (467), Mrs. Wallace, St. Luke's Vicarage, Stepney. Mrs. Jameson's *Legends of the Monastic Orders.*

Second Prize.

*Kentigern [Thistle] (452), Miss E. J. Forbes, 17, Ainslie Place, Edinburgh. Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, Library Edition.

Third Prize.

*Cocksmoor [Edina] (451) Miss H. A. Forbes. Trench's *Mediæval Church History.*

Fourth Prize.

*Speranza } (430) { Miss Maude Ball, 13, Park Lane, Stoke Newington.
*Water Wagtail } (430) { Miss Bealey, Oak Lea, Harrogate.
Each, Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, crown 8vo. edition.

[Bog-Oak promised several who began late, that if ten such Members were enrolled, she would give an extra prize among them.] †Polypodium (370), Miss M. G. A. Houblon, Wantage Vicarage, is *facile princeps* among these.

Extra Prize.

Freeman's *Old English History.*

*Papaver	416	*Verena	398	*Bluebell	380
*Charissa	411	*Ierne	396	Decima	371
*Violets	399	*Fidelia	393	*Veritas	365
		*Erica	389		

Second Class.

Minimum 240.

Vorwärts	349	*Καθολικος	313	Cox	278
*Countess	347	*Portia	312	Cecilia	272
Sycorax	338	Box	302	Mervarid	245
Hegesippus	331	Vivia	280	Malacoda	242

Third Class.

‡De Maura †Trudel	229	Frideswide	220	†Evelyn	138
		†Andromache	180	†Theodosius	111
Miss Muffet	226	†Hispania	164	Elk	77

And 14 Members unclassed.

* Answered every question. † Began late.
‡ Several papers lost in the post.

N.B. No one is classed who has not sent six papers, or who has left off the last six months.

REMARKS.

45. Members can compare their answers on the Missions to the Heptarchy with the following:

Kent.	Northumbria.	E. Anglia.	Mercia.	Essex.	Wessex.	Sussex.
Rome. 597	Rome. 625 Scotic. 635	Rome. 628 & 631 (*St. Felix*) Scotic. 633	Scotic. 653 Saxon (*Chad, etc.*) 669	Rome. 604 Saxon (*Sent by Scots*). 653 Scotic. 665	Rome. 634	Saxon. 681

This fairly illustrates Freeman's saying, 'The Roman planted, the Scot watered, and the Briton simply did nothing.' *Verena:* Wales was not part of Mercia, nor was it converted at this time, but previously. *Etheldreda*, etc.: St. Felix was sent by Honorius *Archbishop of Canterbury;* Birnius by *Pope* Honorius. Bog-Oak cannot find the slightest real evidence for the oft-quoted statement that when Aidan came, only two years after Paulinus' flight, almost all trace of the latter's work was lost, and no Christians were to be found. *Cocksmoor:* Is it true that Keltic missionaries never took flight, while Roman did? If we have Paulinus, Mellitus, and Justus, on one hand, what is to be said on the other of those British Clergy who in a body deserted their 'holy places,' also St. Kentigern fled from Scotland to Wales, St. Cadoc from Wales to Brittany. No doubt these flights were wise, but still they were flights.

One great difference between Kelt and Roman was in their monastic systems. The Kelts were first hermits, and secondly monks; the Romans were thorough-going monks. Hermits met a want in their day, but the need of them in large numbers was passing away. The ordinary hermit regarded work—even giving advice—as rather to be deplored. The Benedictine looked on *all* work as part of a monk's consecrated vocation. Even the Keltic monastery resembled a group of cells, and their spiritual centre was the wilderness, not the abodes of men. *Andromache:* The Kelts were *not* organisers (though great converters); the Romans were.

46. The battles are best given by *Cocksmoor*, *Kentigern*, *Etheldreda*, *Sycorax*, *Bluebell*, *Verena*, *Ierne*, *Violets*, *Fidelia*, *Polypodium*, *Veritas*, *De Maura*. Clearly Christian victories are more attractive than defeats. To twelve accounts of Hatfield, there are twenty-five of Heavensfield, to seven of Maserfield, fourteen of Winwidfield. *Box:* It was a cross which St. Oswald set up, the Crucifix was as yet unused. *Speranza:* St. Oswald was Oswy's brother, not his forefather.

47. Excellent accounts of Whitby and the Easter Festival by *Etheldreda*, *Water Wagtail*, *Sycorax*, *Verena*, *Malacoda*, *Polypodium*, *Firenze*, *Λαμβδα*, *Andromache*. No one is very clear about cycles. There were two questions about Easter: 1st. Which moon was to be the Paschal moon? 2nd. On which day of this moon should the Feast fall? The cycle of nineteen years used at Alexandria, and later at Rome, is ours (with Gregorian reforms), and is called the Metonic cycle, because discovered by the Athenian Meton, B.C. 433. It was inscribed in golden characters on the walls of the Temple of Pallas, hence our term *Golden Number* for those attached to certain days in March and April in the Calendar, marking the possible dates of the ecclesiastical Paschal Full Moon (generally, though not always, the same as the Astronomical moon), which is always the next after the Equinox. The Culdees, using a wrong cycle, sometimes took altogether a wrong moon. As to the day—when they took the right moon their Easter usually coincided with the Catholic Easter, being the Sunday after the Full Moon. But when that fell on a Sunday the Culdees kept that Sunday, the rest of the Church kept the succeeding Sunday. *Veritas*, etc.: It was not the 14th day of March, but of the moon. *Kentigern*, and others, omit Wilfrid's strongest point, that the Culdees followed *no* Apostle, for St. John was supposed to have kept the Quartodecimam use. *Countess* confuses these two. Several confound St. Cedd, Bishop of the East Saxons, with his brother St. Chad. The former was the interpreter at Whitby. *Speranza:* Neither the Greek, nor any Church, keeps the Quartodecimam Easter. The Julian Calendar gradually went wrong, four days wrong in the Metonic cycle, and ten in the days of the month, so that the true Equinox fell earlier than the imaginary one. Pope Gregory reformed this in 1582, and non-Roman lands, thinking this involved Papal Supremacy, followed it very slowly, and the Greeks never, so that they keep their Easter on the Sunday after the full moon of *their* vernal Equinox, which falls about twelve days later than the true one.

48. Very charmimg lives of St. Wilfrid, especially by *Cocksmoor*, *Kentigern*, *Etheldreda* (full), and *Papaver* (well abbreviated). It is a puzzling life, considering he administered at various times most of the Dioceses in England. These landmarks should have been noticed: Early life and first visit to Rome, 654. Abbot of Ripon, 661. Elected Bishop of York, 665. His work in Mercia and Kent, and Restoration, 669. Nine years episcopate at York. His troubles and first appeal to Rome, 678. The Councils at Rome, 679. Imprisonment, 680. Five years in Sussex. Reconciliation with Theodore, 686. Five years at York. Eleven years exile in Mercia, 691. Easterfield, and second appeal to Rome, 702, Council at Rome, 704. Reception in England and Rejection. Council of Nidd and restoration to Hexham, 706. Death, 709.

Several confound Alchfrid Oswy's eldest son, Wilfrid's pupil, with Aldfrid the Wise, his half-brother, who succeeded Egfrid and persecuted St. Wilfrid.

Notices to Correspondents.

Madrid.—Fernando Caballero's novels are always safe reading. Also some Spanish plays by Moratin are easy Spanish. Of older books, Las Guerras 'Civiles de Granada,' Cervantes 'Galatea,' Florian's 'Estela,' and 'Gonzalo di Cordova,' translated into Spanish, the one by Vincente Rodrigo, the other by J. L. Penatvir.

M. J.—It is to be feared that the Churches were mostly dedicated to St. George on account of his legend. The Rev. S. B. Gould gives an history as far as it is known. He became the Patron Saint of England in consequence of being already the patron of Poitou. There is a mention of the Synod of Gelasius in Fleury's ecclesiastical history; but in the summary there given there is no mention of St. George. Perhaps some correspondent may tell you where to find it.

To the Editor of the 'Monthly Packet.'

Dear Madam,

I think that the readers of the 'Monthly Packet,' a Magazine which does so much to encourage earnest and systematic study, may be glad to know of a library especially designed to meet the needs of students. It was established at their central office in Leeds by the Yorkshire Ladies' Council of Education nearly twenty years ago, in order to help ladies preparing for the Universities' Higher Local Examinations, attending Educational Lectures, or studying by themselves. It contains books on Biblical Study, History, Literature, Mathematics, Physical, Natural, and Moral Science, French, and German works, etc.; the numbers of which are largely increased every year according to the requirements of students. During the last few years the average number of annual subscribers has been over seventy; most of these are of course inhabitants of Great Britain or Ireland, but some live in countries so far distant as France, Belgium, and Bavaria. The greatest appreciation has always been shown by them of the advantages afforded by the library, especially the plan of having the books forwarded to subscribers, however distant, by post, the length of time permitted for keeping them, and the low rate of the subscription (5*s.* annually, in addition to the cost of transmission of books—an amount just sufficient to cover working expenses). The Committee are therefore most anxious that the good work the library is already doing may be still further extended, and will be very grateful if you will kindly allow its existence to be made known through so good a medium as the 'Monthly Packet.'

I will gladly send the rules of the library to any one who thinks of subscribing, and who sends me a stamped and addressed envelope.

Yours faithfully,
(Miss) EDITH LITTLE,
Hon. Secretary.

Chapel-Allerton, Leeds.

Felix.—From poem on the 'Accession' in Keble's 'Christian Year.'

A. M.—

'Her feet have touched the meadows'

is from Tennyson's 'Maud.'

'Men may rise on stepping stones'

is from Longfellow's 'Ladder of St. Augustine.'

R. G. S.—The author of the 'After Glow' was the Rev. George Cautley.

Miss Duncan.—'The Letters on Spiritual Life' have not been republished.

Mrs. Picton, Feelstone Rectory, North Tyne, Northumberland, is anxious to procure a copy of Edwin Arnold Newdigate's prize poem, 'The Feast of Belshazzar.' When read the loan shall be returned.

The Monthly Packet.

APRIL, 1890.

TWO PENNILESS PRINCESSES.

CHAPTER IV.

ST. HELEN'S.

'I thought King Henry had resembled thee,
In courage, courtship and proportion:
But all his mind is bent to holiness,
To number Ave-Maries on his beads:
His champions are—the prophets and apostles;
His weapons, holy saws of sacred writ.—*King Henry VI.*

George Douglas's chivalrous venture in defence of the falcon of his lady-love had certainly not done much for him hitherto, as Davie observed. The Lady Joanna, as everyone now called her, took it as only the bounden duty and natural service of one of her suite, and would have cared little for his suffering for it personally, except so far as it concerned her own dignity, which she understood much better than she had done in Scotland, where she was only one of 'the lassies,' an encumbrance to everyone.

The York retainers had dropped all idea of visiting his offence upon him, when they found that he had acted in the service of an honoured guest of their lord, but they did not look with much favour on him or on any other of the Scottish troop whom their master enjoined them to treat as guests and comrades.

The uniting of so many suites of the mighty nobles of the fifteenth century formed quite a little army, amounting to some two or three hundred horsemen, mostly armed, and well-appointed, with their master's badges on their sleeves, falcon and fetterlock, dun cow, bear and ragged staff and the cross of Durham, while all likewise wore in their caps the white rose. Waggons with household furniture, and kitchen needments had been sent in advance with the numerous 'black guard,' and a provision of cattle for slaughter accompanied these, since it was one of the considerate acts that already had won affection to Richard of York that unlike many of the great nobles, he always avoided as much as possible letting his train be oppressive to the country people.

David Drummond had been seeing that all his father's troop were duly provided with the Drummond badge, the thyme, which was requisite as showing them accepted of the Duke of York's company, but as George and his followers had never submitted to wear it, he was somewhat surprised to find the grey blossom prominent in George's steel guarded cap, and to hear him saying—

'Don it, Ringan, as thou wouldst obey me.'

'His father's son is not his own father,' said Ringan sulkily.

'Then tak thy choice of wearing it, or winning hame as thou canst—most like hanging on the nearest oak.'

'And I'd gey liefer than demean myself in the Drummond thyme!' replied Ringan, half turning away. 'But then what would come of Grey Meg wi' only the master to see till her,' muttered he, caressing the mare's neck. 'Weel, aweel, sir'—and he held out his hand for the despised spray.

'Is yon thy wild callant, Geordie,' said David in some surprise, for Ringan was not only provided with a pony, but his thatch of tow-like hair had been trimmed and covered with a barret cap, and his leathern coat and leggings were like those of the other horse-boys.'

'Ay,' said George, 'this is no place to be ower kenspeckle.'

'I was coming to ask,' said David, 'if thou wouldst not own thyself to my father, and take thy proper place ere ganging further south. It irks me to see some of the best blood in Scotland among the grooms.'

'It must irk thee still, Davie,' returned George. 'These English folk might not thole to see my father's son in their hands without winning something out of him, and I saw by what passed the other day that thou and thy father would stand by me, hap what hap, and I'll never embroil him and peril the lady by my freak.'

'My father kens pretty well wha is riding in his companie,' said David.

'Ay, but he is not bound to ken.'

'And thou winna write to the Yerl as ye said ye would when ye were ower the Border? There's a clerk o' the Bishop of Durham ganging back, and my father is writing letters that he will send forward to the King, and thou couldst get a scart o' the pen to thy father.'

'And what wad be thought of a puir man at arms sending letters to the Yerl,' said George. 'Na, na, I may write when we win to France, a friendly land, but while we are in England, the loons shall make naething out of my father's son.'

'Weel, gang thine ain gait, and an unco' strange one it is,' said David. 'I marvel what thou count'st on gaining by it!'

'The sicht of her at least,' said George. 'Nay, she needed a stout hand once, she may need it again.'

Whereat David waved his hands in a sort of contemptuous wonder.

'If it were the Duchess of York now!' he said. 'She is far bonnier and even prouder, gin that be what taks your fancy! And as to our Jeannie, they are all cockering her up till she'll no be content with a king. I doot me if the Paip himself wad be good enough for her!'

It was true that the brilliant and lively Lady Joanna was in high favour with the princely gallants of the cavalcade. The only member of the party at all equal to her in beauty was the Duchess of York, who travelled in a whirlicote with her younger children and her ladies, and at the halting places never relaxed the stiff dignity with which she treated everyone. Eleanor did indeed accompany her sister, but she had not Jean's quick power of repartee, and she often answered at haphazard and was not understood when she did reply—nor had she Jean's beauty, so that in the opinion of most of the young nobles she was but a raw, almost dumb, Scotswoman, and was left to herself as much as courtesy permitted, except by the young King of the Isle of Wight, a gentle, poetical personage, in somewhat delicate health, with tastes that made him the chosen companion of the scholarly King Henry. He could repeat a great deal of Chaucer's poetry by heart, the chief way in which people could as yet enjoy books, and there was an interchange between them of 'Blind Harry,' and of the 'Canterbury Tales,' as they rode side by side, sometimes making their companions laugh, and wonder that the youthful queen was not jealous. Dame Lilias found her congenial companion in the Countess Alice of Salisbury, who could talk with her of that golden age of the two Kings, Henry and James, of her brother Malcolm, and of Esclairmonde de Luxembourg, now Sister Clare, whom they hoped soon to see in the sisterhood of St. Katharine's.

'Hers hath been the happy course, the blessed dedication,' said Countess Alice.

'We have both been blessed too, thanks to the saints,' returned Lilias.

'That is indeed sooth,' replied the other lady. 'My lord hath ever been most good to me, and I have had joy of my sons. Yet there is much that my mind forbodes and shrinks back from in dread, as I watch my son Richard's overmastering spirit.'

'The Cardinal and the Duke of Gloucester have long been at strife, as we heard,' said Lady Drummond, 'but sure that will be appeased now that the Cardinal is an old man and your King come to years of discretion.'

'The King is a sweet youth, a very saint already,' replied the Countess, 'but I misdoubt whether he have the stout heart and strong hand of his father, and he is set on peace.'

'Peace is to be followed,' said Lilias, amazed at the tone in which her friend mentioned it.

'Peace at home! Ay, but peace at home is only to be had by war abroad. Peace abroad without honour only leaves these fiery spirits to fume, and fly at one another's throats, or at those who wrought it.

My mind misgives me, mine old friend, lest wrangling lead to blows. I had rather see my Richard spurring against the French than against his cousins of Somerset, and while they advance themselves and claim to be nearer in blood to the King than our good host of York, so long will there be cause of bitterness.'

'Our kindly host seems to wish evil to no man.'

'Nay, he is content enough, but my sister his wife, and alas! my son, cannot let him forget that after the Duke of Gloucester he is highest in the direct male line to King Edward of Windsor, and in the female line stands nearer than this present King.'

'In Scotland, he would not forget that his father suffered for that very cause.'

'Ah, Lilias, thou hast seen enow of what such blood feuds work in Scotland, to know how much I dread and how I pray they may never awaken here. The blessed King Harry of Monmouth kept them down by the strong hand, while he won all hearts to himself. It is my prayer that his young son may do the like, and that my Lord of York be not fretted out of his peaceful loyalty by the Somerset outrecuidance, and above all that my own son be not the make-bate; but Richard is proud and fiery, and I fear—I greatly fear, what may be in store for us.'

Lilias thought of Eleanor's vision, but kept silence respecting it.

Forerunners had been sent on by the Duke of York to announce his coming, and who were in his company; and on the last stage these returned, bringing with them a couple of knights and of clerks on the part of the Cardinal of Winchester to welcome his great-nieces, whom he claimed as his guests.

'I had hoped that the Ladies of Scotland would honour my poor house,' said the Duke.

'The Lord Cardinal deems it thus more fitting,' said the portly priest who acted as Beaufort's secretary, and who spoke with an authority that chafed the Duke.

Richard Nevil rode up to him and muttered—

'He hath divined our purpose, and means to cross it.'

The clerk, however, spoke with Sir Patrick, and in a manner took possession of the young ladies. They were riding between walled courts, substantially built, with intervals of fields and woods, or sometimes indeed of morass; for London was still an island in the middle of swamps, with the great causeways of the old Roman times leading to it. The spire of St. Paul's, and the square keep of the Tower had been pointed out to them, and Jean exclaimed—

'My certie, it is a braw toon!' but Eleanor, on her side, exclaimed,

''Tis but a flat! Mine eye wearies for the sea; aye, and for Arthur's Seat, and the Castle! Oh, I wadna' gie Embro' for forty of sic toons!'

Perhaps Jean had guessed enough to make her look on London with an eye of possession, for her answer was—

'Hear till her; and she was the first to cry out upon Embro' for a place of reivers and land loupers, and to want to leave it.'

There was so much that was new and wonderful that the sisters pursued the question no further. They saw the masts of the shipping in the Thames, and what seemed to them a throng of church towers and spires; while, nearer, the road began to be full of market-folk, the women in hoods, and mantles, and short petticoats, the men in long frocks, such as their Saxon forefathers had worn, driving the rough ponies or donkeys that had brought in their produce. There were begging friars in cowl and frock, and beggars, not friars, with crutch and bowl; there were gleemen and tumbling women, solid tradesfolk going out to the country farms they loved, troops of 'prentices on their way to practice with the bow or cudgel, and parties of gaily-coloured nobles, knights, squires, and burgesses, coming, like their own party, to the meeting of Parliament.

There were continual greetings, the Duke of York showing himself most markedly courteous to all, his dark head being almost continuously uncovered, and bending to his saddle-bow in response to the salutations that met him; and friendly inquiries and answers being often exchanged. The Earl of Salisbury and his son were almost equally courteous; but in the midst of all the interest of these greetings, soon after entering the city at Bishopsgate, the clerk caused the two Scottish sisters to draw up at an arched gateway in a solid-looking wall, saying that it was here that my Lord Cardinal wished his royal kinswomen to be received at the Priory of St. Helen's. A hooded lay-sister looked out at a wicket, and on his speaking to her, proceeded to unbar the great gates, while the Duke of York took leave in a more than kindly manner, declaring that they would meet again, and that he knew 'My Lady of St. Helen's would make them good cheer.'

Indeed, he himself, and the King of Wight, rode into the outer court, and lifted the two ladies down from horseback, at the inner gate, beyond which they might not go. Jean, crossed now for the first time since she had left home, was in tears of vexation, and could hardly control her voice to respond to his words, muttering—

'As if I looked for this. Beshrew the old priest!'

None but female attendants could be admitted. Sir Patrick, with his sons and the rest of the train, were to be lodged at the great palace of the Bishop of Winchester at Southwark, and as he came up to take leave of Jean, she said, with a stamp of her foot and a clench of her hand—

'Let my uncle know that I am no cloister bird to be mewed up here. I demand to be with the friends I have made, and who have bidden me.'

Shrewd Sir Patrick smiled a little as he said—

'I will tell the Lord Cardinal what you say, lady; but methinks you will find that submission to him with a good grace carries you farther here than does ill-humour.'

He said something of the same kind to his wife as he took leave of her, well knowing who were predominant with the King, and who were in opposition, the only link being the King of Wight, or rather Earl of Warwick, who, as the son of Henry's guardian, had been bred up in the closest intimacy with the monarch, and, indeed, had been invested with his fantastic sovereignty that he might be treated as a brother and on an equality.

Jean, however, remained very angry and discontented. After her neglected and oppressed younger days, the courtesy and admiration she had received for the last ten days had the effect of making her like a spoilt child; and when they entered the inner cloistered court within, and were met by the Lady Prioress, at the head of all her sisters in black dresses, she hardly vouchsafed an inclination of the head in reply to the graceful and courtly welcome with which she received the princesses, nieces to the great Cardinal. Eleanor, usually in the background, was left in surprise and confusion to stammer out thanks in broad Scotch, seconded by Lady Drummond, who could make herself far more intelligible to these south-country ears.

There was a beautiful cloister, a double walk with clustered columns running down the centre and a vaulted roof, and with a fountain in the midst of the quadrangle. There was a chapel on one side, the buildings of the Priory on the others. It was only a Priory, for the parent Abbey was in the country; but the Prioress was a noble lady of the house of Stafford, a small personage as to stature, but thoroughly alert and business-like, and, in fact, the moving spring not only of the actual house, but of the parent abbey, manager of the property it possessed in the city, and of all its monastic politics.

Without apparent offence, she observed that no doubt the ladies were weary, and that Sister Mabel should conduct them to the guest-chamber. Accordingly, one of the black figures led the way, and as soon as they were beyond ear-shot, there were observations that would not have gratified Jean.

'The ill-nurtured Scots!' cried one young nun.

''Tis ever the way with them,' returned a much older one. 'I mind when one was captive in my father's castle who was a mere clown, and drank up the water that was meant to wash his fingers after meat. The guest-chamber will need a cleaning after they are gone!'

'Methinks it was less lack of manners than lack of temper,' said the Prioress. 'She hath the Beaufort face, and the Beaufort spirit.'

The chapel bell began to ring, and the black veils and white filed in long procession to the pointed door-way, while the two Scottish damsels, with Lady Drummond, her daughter, and Christie, were conducted to three chambers looking out on the one side on the cloistered court, on the other over a choicely-kept garden, walled in, but planted with trees shading the turf walks. The rooms were, as Sister Mabel explained with some complacency, reserved for the lodging of the noble ladies who came to London, as guests of my Lord Cardinal, or with petitions to the King; and certainly there was nothing of asceticism about them; but they were an advance even on those at Fotheringay. St. Helena discovering the Cross was carved over the ample chimney, and the hangings were of Spanish leather, with all the wondrous history of Santiago's relics, including the miracle of the cock and hen, embossed, and gilt upon them. There was a Venetian mirror, in which the ladies saw more of themselves than they had ever done before, and with exquisite work around; there were carved chests inlaid with ivory, and cushions, perfect marvels of needlework, as were the curtains and coverlets of the mighty bed, and the screens to be arranged for privacy. There were toilette vessels of beautifully shaped and brightly polished brass, and on a silver salver was a refection of manchet bread, comfits, dried cherries and wine.

Sister Mabel explained that a lay sister would be at hand, in case anything was needed by the noble ladies, and then hurried away to vespers.

Jean threw herself upon the cross-legged chair that stood nearest.

'A nunnery forsooth! Does our uncle trow that is what I came here for? We have had enow of nunneries at home.'

'Oh, fie for shame, Jeanie!' cried Eleanor.

''Twas thou that saidst it,' returned Jean. 'Thou saidst thou hadst no call to the veil, and gin my Lord trows that we shall thole to be shut up here, he will find himself in the wrong.'

'Lassie, lassie,' exclaimed Lady Drummond, 'what ails ye? This is but a lodging, and sic a braw chamber as ye hae scarce seen before. Would you have your uncle lodge ye among all his priests and clerks? Scarce the place for douce maidens, I trow.'

'Leddy of Glenuskie, ye're not sae sib to the bluid royal of Scotland as to speak thus! Lassie indeed!'

Again Eleanor remonstrated.

'Jeanie, to speak thus to our gude kinswoman!'

'I would have all about me ken their place, and what fits them,' said the haughty young lady, partly out of ill-temper and disappointment, partly in imitation of the demeanour of Duchess Cicely. 'As to the Cardinal, I would have him bear in mind that we are a king's own daughters, and he is at best but the grandson of a king! And if he deems that he has a right to shut us up here out of sight of the King and his court, lest we should cross his rule over his King and disturb his French policy and craft, there are those that will gar him ken better!'

'Someone else will ken better,' quietly observed Dame Lilias. 'Gin ye be no clean daft, Leddy Joanna, since naething else will serve ye, canna ye see that to strive with the Cardinal is the worst gait to win his favour with the King, gin that be what ye be set upon?'

'There be others that can deal with the King forbye the Cardinal,' said Jean, tossing her head.

Just then arrived a sister, sent by the Mother Prioress, to invite the ladies to supper in her own apartments.

Her respectful manner so far pacified Jean's ill-humour, that a civil reply was returned, the young ladies bestirred themselves to make preparations, though Jean grumbled at the trouble for 'a pack of women folk'—and supposed they were to make a meal of dried pease and red herrings, like their last on Lammermuir.

It was a surprise to be conducted, not to the refectory, where all the nuns took their meal together, but to a small room opening into the cloister on one side, and with a window embowered in vines on the other, looking into the garden. It was by no means bare, like the typical cells of strict convents. The mother, Margaret Stafford, was a great lady, and the Benedictines of the old foundation of St. Helens in the midst of the capital were indeed respectable and respected, but very far from strict observers of their rule—and St. Helens was so much influenced by the wealth and display of the city that the nuns, many of whom were these great merchant's daughters, would have been surprised to be told that they had departed from Benedictine simplicity. So the Prioress's chamber was tapestried above with St. Helena's life, and below was enclosed with drapery panels. It was strewed with sweet fresh rushes, and had three cross-legged chairs, besides several stools; the table, as usual upon trestles, was provided with delicate napery, and there was a dainty perfume about the whole; a beautiful Crucifix of ivory and ebony, with images of Our Lady and St. John on either side, and another figure of St. Helena, cross in hand, presiding over the holy water stoup, were the most ecclesiastical things in the garniture, except the exquisitely illuminated breviary that lay open upon a desk.

Mother Margaret rose to receive her guests with as much dignity as Jean herself could have shown, and made them welcome to her poor house, hoping that they would there find things to their mind.

Something restrained Jean from bursting out with her petulant complaint, and it was Eleanor who replied with warm thanks. 'My Lord Cardinal would come to visit them on the morn,' the Prioress said, 'and in the meantime, she hoped,' looking at Jean, 'they would condescend to the hospitality of the poor daughters of St. Helen.'

The hospitality, as brought in by two plump well-fed lay sisters, consisted of 'chickens in cretyne,' stewed in milk, seasoned with sugar, coloured with saffron, of potage of oysters, butter of almond-milk, and other delicate meats, such as had certainly never been tasted at Stirling or Dunbar. Lady Drummond's birth entitled her and Annis to sit at table with the Princesses and the Prioress, and she ventured to enquire after Esclairmonde de Luxembourg, or as she was now called Sister Clare of St. Katharine's.

'I see her at times. She is the head of the Sisters,' said the Prioress; 'but we have few dealings with uncloistered sisters.'

'They do a holy work,' observed Dame Lilias.

'None ever blamed the Benedictines for lack of alms-deeds,' returned the Prioress haughtily, scarcely attending to the guest's disclaimer. 'Nor do I deem it befitting that instead of the poor coming to us, our sisters should run about to all the foulest hovels of the Docks, encountering men continually, and those of the rudest sort.'

'Yet there are calls and vocations for all,' ventured Lady Drummond. 'And the sick are brethren in need.'

'Let them send to us for succour then,' answered Mother Margaret. 'I grant that it is well that someone should tend them in their huts, but such tasks are for sisters of low birth and breeding. Mine are ladies of noble rank, though I do admit daughters of Lord Mayors and Aldermen.'

'Our Saint Margaret was a Queen, reverend mother,' put in Eleanor.

'She was no nun, saving your Grace,' said the Prioress. 'What I speak of is that which beseems a daughter of St. Bennet, of an ancient and royal foundation! The saving of the soul is so much harder to the worldly life, specially to a queen, that it is no marvel if she has to abase herself more—even to the washing of lepers—than is needful to a vowed and cloistered sister.'

It was an odd theory, that this Benedictine seclusion saved trouble, as being actually the strait course; but the young maidens were not scholars enough to question it, and Dame Lilias, though she had learnt more from her brother and her friend, would have deemed it presumptuous to dispute with a Reverend Mother. So only Eleanor murmured, 'The holy Margaret no Saint'—and Jean, 'Weel, I had liefer take my chance.'

'All have not a vocation,' piously said the Mother. 'Taste this Rose Dalmoyne, madame, our lay sister Mold is famed for making it. An Alderman of the Fishmonger's Company sent to beg that his cook might know the secret, but that was not to be lightly parted with, so we only send them a dish for their banquets.'

Rose Dalmoyne was chiefly of pease, flavoured with almonds and milk, but the guests grew weary of the varieties of delicacies, and were very glad when the tables were removed, and Eleanor asked permission to look at the illuminations in the breviary on the desk.

And exquisite they were. The book had been brought from Italy and presented to the Prioress by a merchant who wished to place his daughter in St. Helens, and the beauty was unspeakable. There were natural flowers painted so perfectly that the scattered violets seemed to invite the hand to lift them up from their gold besprinkled bed, and flies and beetles that Eleanor actually attempted to drive away, and at all the greater holy days, the type and the antitype covering the two whole opposite pages, were represented in the admirable art and pure colouring of the early Cinquecento.

Eleanor and Annis were entranced, and the Prioress, seeing that books had an attraction for her younger guest, promised her on the morrow a sight of some of the metrical lives of the Saints, especially of St. Katharine and of St. Cecilia. It must be owned that Jean was not fretted as she expected by chapel bells in the middle of the night, nor was even Lady Drummond summoned by them as she intended, but there was a conglomeration of the night services in the morning, with beautiful singing, that delighted Eleanor, and the festival mass ensuing was also more ornate than anything to be seen in Scotland. And that the extensive almsgiving had not been a vain boast, was evident from the swarms of poor of all kinds who congregated in the outer court, for the attention of the Sisters Almoner and Infirmarer, attended by two or three novices and some lay sisters.

There were genuine poor, ragged forlorn women, and barefooted, almost naked children, and also sturdy beggars, pilgrims and palmers on their way to various shrines, north or south, and many more for whom a dole of broth or bread sufficed; but there were also others with heads or limbs tied up, sometimes injured in the many street fights, but oftener with the terrible sores, only too common from the squalid habits, and want of vegetable diet, of the poor. These were all attended to with a tenderness and patience that spoke well for the charity of Sister Anne and her assistants, and indeed before long, Dame Lilias perceived that however slack and easy going the general habits might be, there were truly meek and saintly women among them.

The morning was not far advanced before a lay-sister came hurrying in from the portress's wicket, to announce that my Lord Cardinal was on his way to visit the Ladies of Scotland. There was great commotion. Mother Margaret summoned all her nuns and drew them up in state, and Sister Mabel, who carried the tidings to the guests, asked whether they would not join in receiving him.

'We are king's daughters' said Jean haughtily.

'But he is a Prince of the Church and an aged man,' said Lady Drummond, who had already risen, and was adjusting that head-gear of Eleanor's that never would stay in its place. And her matronly voice acted upon Jean, so as to conquer the petulant pride, enough to make her remember that the Lady of Glenuskie was herself a Stewart, and king's grandchild, and moreover knew more of courts and their habits than herself.

So down they went together, in time to join the Prioress on the steps, as the attendants of the great stately, princely Cardinal Bishop began to appear. He did not come in state, so that he had only half a dozen clerks and as many gentlemen in attendance, together with Sir Patrick and his two sons.

Few of the Plantagenet family had been long lived, and Cardinal Beaufort was almost a marvel in the family at seventy. Much evil has been said and written of him, and there is no doubt that he was one of those mediæval prelates who ought to have been warriors or statesmen, and that he had been no model for the Episcopacy in his youth. But though far from having been a saint, it would seem that his unpopularity in his old age was chiefly incurred by his desire to put an end to the long and miserable war with France, and by his opposition to a much worse man, the Duke of Gloucester, whose plausible murmurs and amiable manners made him a general favourite. At this period of his life the old man had lived past his political ambitions, and his chief desire was to leave the gentle young king freed from the wasting war by a permanent peace, to be secured by a marriage with a near connection of the French monarch, and daughter to the most honourable and accomplished Prince in Europe. That his measures turned out wretchedly has been charged upon his memory, and he has been supposed guilty of a murder, of which he was certainly innocent, and which probably was no murder at all.

He had become a very grand and venerable old man, when old men were scarce, and his white hair and beard (a survival of the customs of the days of Edward III.) contrasted well with his scarlet hat and cape, as he came slowly into the cloistered court, on his large sober-paced Spanish mule; a knight and the chaplain of the convent assisted him from it, and the whole troop of the convent knelt as he lifted his fingers to bestow his blessing, Jean casting a quick glance around to satisfy her proud spirit. The Prioress then kissed his hand, but he raised, and kissed the cheeks of, his two grandnieces, after which he moved on to the Prioress's chamber, and there, after being installed in her large chair, and waving to the four favoured inmates to be also seated, he looked critically at the two sisters, and observed—'So, maidens! one favours the mother, the other the father! Poor Joan, it is two and twenty years since we bade her good speed, she and her young king—who behoved to be a minstrel—on her way to her kingdom, as if it were the land of Cockayne, for picking up gold and silver. Little of that she found I trow, poor wench. Alack! it was a sore life we sent her to. And you are mourning her freshly, my maidens! I trust she died at peace with God and man.'

'That reiver, Patrick Hepburn, let the priest from Haddington come to assoilzie and housel her' responded Jean.

'Ah! Masses shall be said for her by my bedesmen at St. Cross, and at all my Churches,' said the Cardinal crossing himself. 'And you are on your way to your sister, the Dolfine, as your knight tells me. It is well. You may be worthily wedded in France, and I will take order for your safe going. Meantime this is a house where you may well serve your poor mother's soul by prayers and masses, and likewise perfect yourselves in French.'

This was not at all what Jean had intended, and she pouted a little, while the Cardinal asked, changing his language, '*Ces donzelles, ont elles appris le Francais?*'

Jean, who had tried to let Father Romuald teach her a little in conversation during the first part of the journey, but who had dropped the notion since other ideas had been inspired at Fotheringay, could not understand, and pouted the more; but Eleanor, who had been interested, and tried more in earnest, for Margaret's sake, answered diffidently and blushing deeply, '*Un petit peu, beau Sire Oncle.*'

He smiled, and said, 'You can be well instructed here. The Reverend Mother hath sisters here who can both speak and write French of Paris.'

'That have I truly, my good Lord,' replied the Prioress. 'Sisters Isabel and Beata spent their younger days, the one at Rouen, the other at Bordeaux, and have learned many young ladies in the true speaking of the French tongue.'

'It is well!' said the Cardinal, 'my fair nieces will have good leisure. While sharing the orisons that I will institute for the repose of your mother, you can also be taught the French.'

Jean could not help speaking now, so far was this from all her hopes. 'Sir, sir, the Duke and Duchess of York, and the Countess of Salisbury, and the Queen of the Isle of Wight all bade us to be their guests.'

'They could haply not have been aware of your dool' said the Cardinal gravely.

'But my Lord, our mother hath been dead since before Martinmas,' exclaimed Jean.

'I know not what customs of dool be thought befitting in a land like Scotland' said the Cardinal, in such a repressive manner that Jean was only withheld by awe from bursting into tears of disappointment and anger at the slight to her country.

Lady Drummond ventured to speak. 'Alack, my Lord,' she said, 'my poor queen died in the hands of a freebooter, leaving her daughters in such stress and peril that they had woe enough for themselves, till their brother the king came to their rescue.'

'The more need that they should fulfil all that may be done for the grace of her soul,' replied the uncle; but just at this crisis of Jean's mortification, there was a knocking at the door, and a sister breathlessly entreated.

'Pardon! Merci! My lord, my lady mother! Here's the King, the King himself—and the King and Queen of the Isle of Wight asking licence to enter to visit the ladies of Scotland.'

Kings were always held to be free to enter anywhere, even far more dangerous monarchs than the pious Henry VI. Jean's heart bounded up again, with a sense of exultation over the old uncle, as the Prioress went out to receive her new guest, and the Cardinal emitted a sort of grunting sigh without troubling himself to go out to meet the youth whom he had governed from babyhood, and in whose own name, he had as one of the council given permission for wholesome chastisements of the royal person.

King Henry entered. He was then twenty-four years old, tall, graceful, and with beautiful features and complexion, almost feminine in their delicacy, and with a wonderful purity and sweetness in the expression of the mouth and blue eyes, so that he struck Eleanor as resembling the angels in the illuminations that she had been studying, as he removed his dark green velvet jewelled cap on entering, and gave a cousinly, respectful kiss lightly to each of the young ladies on her cheek, somewhat as if he were afraid of them, Then after greeting the Cardinal, who had risen on his entrance, he said that hearing that his fair cousins were arrived, he had come to welcome them, and to entreat them to let him do them such honour as was possible in a court without a queen.

'The which lack will soon be remedied,' put in his grand-uncle.

'Truly you are in holy keeping here,' said the pious young King, crossing himself, 'but I trust, my sweet cousins, that you will favour my poor house at Westminster with your presence at a supper, and share such entertainment as is in our power to provide.'

'My nieces are keeping their mourning for their mother, from which they have hitherto been hindered by the tumults of their kingdom,' said the Cardinal.

'Ah!' said the King, crossing himself, and instantly moved, 'far be it from me to break into their holy retirement for such a purpose.' (Jean could have bitten the Cardinal). 'But I will take order with my Lord Abbot of Westminster for a grand Requiem mass for the good Queen Joanna, at which they will, I trust, be present, and they will honour my poor table afterwards.'

To refuse this was quite impossible, and the day was to be fixed after reference to the Abbess. Meantime, the King's eye was caught by the illuminated breviary. He was a connoisseur in such arts, and eagerly stood up to look at it as it lay on the desk. Eleanor could not but come and direct him to the pages with which she had been most delighted. She found him looking at Jacob's dream on the one side, the Ascension on the other.

'How marvellous it is!' she said. 'It is like the very light from the sky!'

'Light from Heaven,' said the King; 'Jacob has found it among the stones. Wandering and homelessness are his first step in the ladder to Heaven!'

'Ah, sir, did you say that to comfort and hearten us?' said Eleanor.

There was a strange look in the startled blue eyes that met hers.

'Nay, truly, lady, I presumed not so far! I was but wondering whether those who are born to have all the world are in the way of the stair to Heaven.'

Meantime the King of Wight had made his request for the presence of the ladies at a supper at Warwick House, and Jean, clasping her hands, implored her uncle to consent.

'I am sure our mother cannot be the better for our being thus mewed up,' she cried, 'and I'll rise at prime, and tell my beads for her.'

She looked so pretty and imploring that the old man's heart was melted, all the more that the King was paying more attention to the book, and the far less beautiful Eleanor, than to her, and the invitation was accepted.

The convent bell rang for nones, and the King joined the devotions of the nuns, though he was not admitted within the choir; and just as these were over, the Countess of Salisbury arrived to take the Lady of Glenuskie to see their old friend, the Mother Clare at St. Katharine's, bringing a sober palfrey for her conveyance.

'A holy woman, full of alms deeds,' said the King. 'The lady is happy in her friendship.'

Which words were worth much to Lady Drummond, for the Prioress sent a lay-sister to invite Mother Clare to a refection at the convent.

(To be continued.)

A STORM IN A TEA-CUP.

BY SELINA GAYE.

X.

HIDE AND SEEK.

'WELL, Fando, you may say just what you like, but she *does* know him!' said Judy, peeping into the room next her own, as she took off her out-door things.

'Who knows who?' asked Fando, without the keen interest which Judy looked for.

'You ought to have said "whom" one of those two times, I should think, as you are so particular—*qui connaît que*; that doesn't sound quite right either. Well, Dulcie, of course, that's one "who," and that friend of hers in the light coat is the other.'

'Well?' Fando bore the information calmly.

'I wish you wouldn't say "well," in that cool, passable sort of way. If you don't want to know I won't tell you; but Madame Aubert and Marie have been chattering like a dozen magpies, and Mrs. Aubert looked as if her black eyes would shoot right out of her head, I can tell you.'

'Well, what is it all about?'

'Why, Dulcie has been having a walk—ever such a long walk—with that friend of hers that she pretended not to know.'

'Judy, what do you mean?'

'She has, then. We had to wait because of the rain, and Marie just remembered that she wanted something in a shop close there, and we didn't tell Dulcie, because she was looking into a window as if she had taken root there, and there were one or two people between, and besides, Marie said she should be back again in a *clin d'œil*; and then actually, in the presence of that moment, Dulcie was gone!'

'Gone!—where?'

'For a walk with her friend, I suppose. She *says* she didn't see us go into the shop, and she thought we had gone away for fun, and went to look for us and lost herself, and tumbled over *him*, and asked the way.'

'Then of course she did, Judy; I am sure she wouldn't say so if it were not true. Why shouldn't she have met him by chance?'

'Well, she knows him, anyway.'

'She might ask anybody the way, whether she knew him or not.'

'People don't generally shake hands with strangers when they ask the way, do they?'

'Shake hands?'

'Yes, I *saw* her! And I sha'n't believe anything she says about it again.'

'And have you been teasing all the way home?'

'No, I haven't, then; because I have got to hold my tongue, and Cousin Hester says I am not to say another syllable about him, or she will be very angry; and, besides, I feel a great deal too contemptible to Dulcie to tease her any more about it. I don't want to make her tell real *black* ones, you know.'

'She wouldn't—I am quite sure she wouldn't; and you oughtn't to think of such a thing, Judy! I am sure you wouldn't like it if she didn't believe you, and if she thought you went and left her on purpose this afternoon, after you had said it was an accident. I am quite certain that she speaks the truth.'

'She shook hands, anyway; and I believe Madame Aubert saw her as well as me, and told Marie; only when those two get together they do gabble so, I couldn't be sure.'

'I sha'n't believe that Dulcie tells stories until I know it.'

But it was an odd tale altogether, and Fando could make nothing of it; though, being herself straight-forward and happily unsuspicious, she was quite determined to think no evil of Dulcie without much more cause than she saw at present. Judy might have been mistaken about the shaking hands—most likely she was—and it was very tiresome for Dulcie that this person, of all others, should have been the one to show her the way. She certainly was unlucky!

But no more was said about the matter, at least just then. Judy scorned to tell tales—she did not reckon Fando as 'anyone'—and even had she not felt herself to be somewhat under a cloud, she was really too much shocked, and too contemptuous, to care to tease Dulcie any more, on this point at least; and, for the remainder of the day, she treated her with dignified coolness. It was sadly lost upon the world in general, however; for, if the difference in her behaviour was noticed at all by any one but Dulcie—who could not help being conscious of it—it was supposed to be due to the morning's accident, which no doubt had sobered her spirits.

The boys had come home much too full of the boat-races to notice any little 'tiffs' among the girls, and they kept the tea-table very lively with the account of all that they had seen and done. The races and games had, it seemed, been much the same as in England, except one, in which two boats, having a man balanced on a little platform at the stern of each, were rowed towards one another, and as they passed, these two, who were armed with long poles having buffers at the end, tried to knock one another over into the water. This was a game which had afforded much amusement, and Jack and Alick entered upon a warm discussion of the possibility of playing it upon the great pond at the back of the house, where there was one old 'tub,' and plenty of room for another, if it could be found.

Judy slipped away after tea to pay a visit to Nanon, and was with her when Cousin Hester came to look at her patient, and be looked at, before she went to the ball. Every one wanted to see her, though she looked just the same as she did on any ordinary evening, except that Marie had scattered some lovely blue corn-flowers about her dress, and had also fastened some in her hair; and certainly Marie had the knack of arranging such things in a particularly tasteful way.

Children and servants were all assembled in the entry to see her off, and then the former returned to the great drawing-room, which looked more cheerful than usual, thanks to the wood-fire which blazed and crackled on the hearth; for, in spite of its being August, the heavy rain had imparted quite enough chilliness to the air to make a fire pleasant company.

It was a very short evening, and an unusually quiet one. Jack and Alick had chosen to do their preparation for mademoiselle, and 'get it over,' that it might not interfere with their plans for the morrow; Fando was anxious to get on with her work for Perrine, and Judy produced hers too, but found it necessary to go and cheer up Nanon so often that she did not make much progress; while Dulcie had taken a book and a footstool, and was sitting by the hearth, looking as if interruption would not be at all welcome to her. She was not reading much, however, and had really taken the book more as a defence against conversation than because she was greatly interested in it; and every now and then she glanced up at the old portraits which hung above the row of straight-backed chairs on the opposite wall, and wondered how Uncle Russell could bear to sit in the room with them, and be followed about by their reproachful eyes.

And yet—it was very inconsistent, of course, and she felt ashamed almost to own it even to herself—but she was beginning to feel that, though of course Mr. Beaumont ought to have his rights recognised and ought to be reinstated, still that it would be rather hard that Cousin Hester should be turned out to make way for him, when she was so good and so kind, and so much beloved by all the people about. She really believed that they would be as sorry to lose her as their fathers and mothers had been to lose the old De Beaumont-Plancöet family, though her name *was* only Russell; and then she would be so terribly shocked and distressed when the truth came out, as it seemed that it certainly must. And then Dulcie proceeded to weave a little romance, as the only way that she could see out of the difficulty. Mr. Beaumont might have an accident; it need not be a very bad one, but he might slip down and break his leg, or sprain his ancle, or some little trifle of that sort—which was not worth considering in comparison with the end to be attained—and he might be taken to one of the peasants' cottages, and be obliged to stay there for a week or two; and during that time he might hear so much about Cousin Hester that, for her sake, he would determine to forgive Uncle Russell. He would just come and look over Plancöet, and then he would go back to England for ever, without making himself known, satisfied that he was leaving his property in good hands!

That would be very nice and generous, quite worthy of a namesake of Monsieur Henri; and there was something affecting in the idea of his looking over every nook and corner of the château, for the first and last time, and going away unrecognised as the heir by any one but herself; but still it did not altogether satisfy her sense of justice. Supposing, however, that by some means Cousin Hester were to find out how magnanimously he had behaved, she would insist on making way for him, and then—Dulcie hardly liked to put the sequel of her romance into words, even unspoken words, but it was not for nothing that she had pored over 'Romeo and Juliet' when she was but nine years old! To be sure the old book had been taken from her, when her studies were discovered, and as she had been forbidden to look at it again, Shakspeare had ever since been a sealed book to her, and she had grown up under the impression that he was an author to be rather ashamed of and carefully avoided, she did not know why; but for all that she had not forgotten the story, and it came to her assistance now, and suggested another possible way out of the difficulty of the situation which she had conjured up.

To do her justice, she really was more concerned just now about Cousin Hester than about her own troubles, though these were increasing. Judy had said not a word, but she had certainly *seen*, and she actually despised her too much to tease! Well, it made things a little easier, for of course she could neither deny nor explain having shaken hands with Mr. Beaumont. She wondered whether she *ought* to give his message to Aunt Mary, or whether she might conveniently forget it; and oh! she did wish he had not said anything about that fatal third time!

However, he was going away for a week at least, a whole week! Much might happen in that time, and at all events she need not worry herself any more, and would be free to enjoy walks and excursions, until it came to an end. And Dulcie went up to bed feeling on the whole a good deal relieved, in spite of the afternoon's misfortunes. But the first thing that she saw on entering her room was a small paper parcel. It was the ribbon which she had bought for Nanon!

Was it intended as a declaration of war?

Nanon's foot was said to be going on as well as could be expected, and she entirely rejected all offers of the doctor; but she was quite unable to attend to her duties, and a black-eyed, rosy-cheeked Pauline was installed in the kitchen in her stead. Nanon had become to a certain extent used to English ways; but Pauline afforded the children much amusement by walking into the dining-room and standing there, in a friendly way, with her arms akimbo, to wish them all *bon appétit*, inquire how they liked her dishes, and make sundry other sociable remarks; and one day, just as Cousin Hester had begun to help the soup, she hurried in and unceremoniously popped a cabbage, whole, into the tureen, explaining that Victorine had carried the latter off while her back was turned.

But she was a good-natured girl, and as condescending in the matter of blackberries as Nanon herself. As these became more and more plentiful, a day seldom passed without some being brought in either morning or afternoon, and the high hedges which bordered the 'hollow ways' or deeply-cut lanes were pretty thoroughly explored.

Harvest had begun by this time, and the sound of flails was to be heard in all directions, for the peasants did not stack or store their corn, but threshed it out at once, in what Uncle Russell called a very wasteful way, inasmuch as they swept a clean place in the middle of the road and used that as their threshing-floor.

Still, wasteful or not, it was a pretty sight to see whole families hard at work, the women in their bright kerchiefs and white caps, using the flail as vigorously as the men, and then winnowing the grain by shaking it in large flat baskets.

Dulcie wished that she could draw well enough to sketch some of the picturesque groups, but figures were beyond her at present. However, she had found out the spot which Mr. Beaumont had mentioned, and she and Fando had devoted one or two afternoons to getting a view of Plancöet, with some tolerably satisfactory results; and it was such a comfort to know that, for some days at all events, there was no chance of a meeting with him, that Dulcie expanded more than she had done yet, thanks also in part perhaps to the fact that Judy let her alone and never once referred to what had happened on the unlucky day of Nanon's accident.

How much of Judy's improvement was due to the half-hour spent daily in Cousin Hester's room, and how much to her lively sense of Dulcie's supposed sins, perhaps it would be as well not to inquire. Cousin Hester herself was a little puzzled, when she had had time to notice it, and once even went the length of inquiring whether there had been any quarrel.

But Judy only said, 'No, there was no quarrel, but just a little coolness,' and she thought it best not to pursue the inquiry any further; and, by the end of the week, Judy was beginning to forget her dignity and behave almost as usual.

The 15th of August was the *fête de l'Empereur*, when there was to be a *Te Deum* in the cathedral, and although Madame Aubert pursed up her lips and said, 'Mais dans notre pays on aime mieux les saints que l'Empereur,' with a significance of expression which left no doubt at all as to *her* sentiments, still it was decided that they should go—a little to Dulcie's surprise, for in her eyes, as doubtless in Madame Aubert's, Louis Napoleon was simply a 'usurper,' though she was much too shy to say anything about it.

The day before the *fête* was so hot that, instead of going for a second walk in the afternoon, they sat under the trees, the girls working and the boys making a very long tail to a kite which was to astonish Jean-Baptiste, while Cousin Hester worked and told stories, and by-and-by, when the boys wandered off, read bits aloud from Madame de Lescure's account of the war in La Vendée, which she had sent for on purpose for Dulcie.

It had been a very pleasant afternoon, just the sort which Dulcie enjoyed far above walks and scrambling expeditions, though they were very well in their way, and she would gladly have seen it prolonged; but tea-time came and Victorine spread the cloth on the grass, and the 'boys' had to be hunted from the meadow, and Pauline came out to see whether her cakes were approved, and Françoise stopped on her way from the garden to chat and admire the 'beaux enfants' and the 'belles demoiselles, l'une plus belle que l'autre,' in very audible tones; and finally Uncle Russell said they looked so cool and comfortable that he must come too, and there of course was an end to La Vendée for that afternoon!

Left to herself, Dulcie would most likely have proceeded to devour the book alone, then and there, but it was growing cooler, and in the interests of the majority, Cousin Hester proposed a game of croquet after tea, adding a hint, which Dulcie took, to the effect that she thought the 'boys' deserved some play, as they had been so good as to leave them to enjoy their reading undisturbed.

Later in the evening, when it was growing too dark to see the hoops, croquet was followed by hide-and-seek, all over the garden, in and out of the out-houses and for a certain distance down the avenue, until the white mists began to rise from the meadow and Marie came to call them in.

'Just one more!' pleaded Judy, 'I have not had a proper turn yet, and I've thought of such an extra splendid place, and I'll promise to come out in five minutes if you don't find me. Fando, you and the boys are to go right up to the top of the garden, and Marie can stay here with Dulcie and Willie just inside the avenue, behind the broken wall.'

Judy generally managed the games, and she was allowed to have her own way now, and having seen the others to their respective posts, away she went to hide, really intending to be as expeditious as possible.

And perhaps she was not actually very long, but Willie was beginning to grow tired and was rather alarmed, first by a beetle which came booming past and blundered into his face, and then by a bat which swooped a great deal lower than was pleasant.

Another minute passed slowly, and still there was no whoop from

Judy; Marie was declaring that she could not wait, when Willie, who had been peering rather nervously down the avenue for some seconds, pressed suddenly closer to Dulcie, saying—

'I don't like to stay here!'

'Why? You're not frightened with Marie and me? Judy will be disappointed, if we go out before she calls; it won't be more——'

But there Dulcie suddenly came to a stop, and gave Willie's hand an involuntary squeeze as she did so; for she had caught a glimpse of something far down the avenue, which took away her breath for the moment.

Evidently Willie had seen it too, for he was hiding his face against her, and gave signs of being not very far from tears.

'Well, then,' said Dulcie hurriedly, 'we'll go, shall we? Marie, we are not going to wait,' and holding Willie's hand tight, she fled through the gate and past the tower, without once turning her head.

'What is it?' whispered Willie, as they reached the safe shelter of the house.

'I—I don't quite know, but—it won't hurt you, Willie,' said Dulcie with an effort, for her heart was beating much faster than was comfortable.

'It's *white!*' said Willie again, speaking in a low tone, as if he were afraid that 'it' should hear him.

'Perhaps—perhaps it was an owl,' Dulcie said desperately.

'It doesn't sing like an owl,' objected Willie.

Just then came the 'whoop,' but he was not inclined to venture out of doors again, and went off to bed with Marie; and when they were gone, Dulcie stole quietly up to her room and lighted a candle, which she did not usually do merely to take off her hat and wash her hands.

'Dulcie! Willie! where are you?'

She heard them calling all about the garden, but it was a minute or two before she could make up her mind to put her head out of the window and tell them where she was. When she did, there was nothing but blackness to be seen in the avenue, and the 'owl's song' had entirely ceased.

'Now, Dulcie, I do call that mean! What did you sneak in for?' was the greeting which met her when she opened the drawing-room door. 'You might have said you didn't mean to play any longer!'

'But I did mean—it was Willie. He did not like waiting any longer.'

'You needn't have come in because he did.'

'It was getting rather cold.'

'Why, Dulcie, what a shiver! You were quite right to come in; here, come and warm yourself,' said Cousin Hester, making room for her by the fire and giving her a cup of coffee.

'Well, I'm sure I don't know what you mean by cold, *I*'m as warm as a toast, and you don't *look* cold now, anyway!'

'We are not all such flibberty-gibbets as you, Judy. Elderly people, like Dulcie and me, can enjoy a fire all the year round,' said Uncle Russell; and no more was said—but Cousin Hester looked at Dulcie now and then in the course of the evening, and hoped that she was merely a little tired and not chilled. Perhaps she had flushed under Judy's reproof only because it made her an object of general attention, but it might be that she was feverish, for the colour had faded away and left her much whiter than usual.

And now she was scarlet again! She *must* have caught cold and had better have some *tisane* when she went to bed, for there was nothing else to account for such sudden changes. No one had spoken to her or even looked at her this time, for Judy had come back from paying a visit to Nanon, full of something that she had heard, or fancied that she had heard. She had found all the servants with Nanon, she said, and they *were* making such a chattering, she believed that they were telling stories about ghosts, for they looked very 'scarey,' and she had heard Marie say something about a *dame blanche* before she opened the door; but directly she went in they all stopped and she could not get them to tell her what it was. All that Victorine would say was that the *dame blanche* of Plancöet did not understand English, and that she would not come back unless one of the real old nobles were there, and there had not been a De Beaumont anywhere near the château for years and years, though Madame Aubert did say there was a Monsieur at the hotel, but she might have deceived herself, and assuredly there was nothing to fear, absolutely nothing!

'As if I were afraid of such nonsense!' said Judy indignantly; 'but *they* are, for I could not help hearing, and they began directly I came away. Victorine wants something that she left in the tower, and there is not one of them that dares go, and Pauline and Marie are worse than any of them. I did not listen, Cousin Hester, but they talked so loud that I could not *help* hearing! May I go out and fetch it for them, whatever it is?'

'No, it is too damp; they must wait till the morning if they are so silly. It can't be anything very important.'

'I wonder what it was that frightened them; they were just "frilling," I know they were.'

'I should think that most likely they have frightened one another! It is very easily done, if they have been telling any of their favourite stories about the Korrigan and the *poulpicans*.'

'Ah, yes, Françoise told me about them when we were picking up apples in the garden. The Korrigan sits near a mossy well and combs her golden hair. I should think that nice little spring down in the meadow would suit her exactly! There was some man who was out hunting and he saw one, and she wasn't at all pleasant to him, for she said that unless he would marry her, he should wither and shrivel up, till all his bones were dry, and die in three days. But he had a wife at home already and he was a plucky sort of man, so he said he wouldn't marry her, and he wouldn't wither and shrivel either!'

'Ah, that was Lord Nann, wasn't it? and he said that he wouldn't die in three days, unless it were God's will.'

> 'But be, as be may, know this, fiend,
> I am a Christian man,
> And sooner far I'd die this hour than
> Wed a Korrigan.'

'Yes; but, Cousin Hester, he did wither and shrivel, and he did die, after all, which is rather hard, when he was so brave.'

'It's only a story!' remarked Jack; 'he wouldn't really, you know. Françoise ought to have said "marine."'

'But, Cousin Hester, it ought not to end like that, ought it?'

'Well, Judy, if there was such a person as Lord Nann, and *if* he met a Korrigan, which I suppose you do not believe, he would not be the first or last person who had died rather than sin, would he?'

'Then he might have been a kind of martyr, you mean? I don't believe Françoise thought of that. I think she thought of nothing but the wicked old Korrigan.'

'Well, whether we call it Korrigan or by any other name, no evil can touch us without permission—that at least we are sure of.'

'I expect Lord Nann got his feet wet and caught a bad cold,' said Judy solemnly. 'Dulcie, are you sure a Korrigan didn't get hold of you this evening? I should think there were a lot of them about, winding in and out among the trees, with white mists wrapped round them! Ugh! it makes me shiver to think how damp they must be!'

'There, Judy, I believe you are "frilling" yourself, without seeing anything!'

'Oh, you needn't think you are going to fearen me! I shouldn't mind seeing a Korrigan. I would try and get hold of her gold comb! But there are others besides Korrigans; there are the tall, white, shining fairies that dance round the *roches aux fées*—heaps of old stones, Françoise says; and then there are their husbands, the *poulpicans*, who ring bells in the woods to call one another. They dance round the *châteaux des poulpicans*, what Uncle Russell calls dolmens, covered places built of great big stones like Wayland's Cave; but they often come to houses at night and make a noise, and people think that it is only the wind, or a weather-cock creaking, or rats; but it is a *poulpican*, and then, Françoise says, it is good to have a pot of millet by your bedside to scatter, for they are obliged to pick it all up grain by grain! Where Françoise comes from, the stones come to life at night! They are what she calls *peulvans*, like S. Samson's stone, only smaller, and they go to drink at the river, and if you happen to meet one you had better get out of its way, for it won't get out of yours, and it will roll you over like a nine-pin, and make you so flat you will never get up again!'

'I was in the midst of the officers,' says the writer, 'and all around me were in tears.'

'They would have been sadder still if they could have known what was coming so soon.'

'Yes, and already there was so much excitement everywhere, especially in Brittany, that there seemed every prospect of civil war, and within a very little while troops were sent into the province to keep the peace.'

'How wonderful it is to think of the different people who have been in S. Sauveur—Duguesclin of course, and very likely our Duke of Lancaster, because people were so much more *honourable*, I suppose, or chivalrous, and did not take advantage of one another; *Kantorbie* did certainly, but then they were all ashamed of him and he was turned out and degraded, and Duguesclin was not afraid to ride straight into Lancaster's tent, and the Duke knew he was quite safe when he came to see the fight. They were more like King Arthur's knights. And then there was the good Duchess Anne! I wish the old stones could tell us some of the things they have seen. I suppose the cathedral was shut up all those years during the Revolution when the guillotine was set up close by, and I wonder what became of M. Carron d'Amery the rector, and whether he knew Henri de la Rochejaquelein.'

'Dulcie knows more about Monsieur Henri than any one else here, I think,' said Cousin Hester, smiling at her. 'I don't remember hearing of his ever being at Dinan, but he might have been.'

'Cousin Hester, I do wonder whether he would have gone to the "Te Deum" to-day.'

It was what Dulcie had wondered more than once, though she had not liked to say so, and in fact she had had sundry scruples about going herself.

'I don't know, I am sure,' said Cousin Hester, 'but I hope he would; and I think there is very little doubt that his great nephew has "assisted" at one somewhere to-day, for I have been told that he has accepted an appointment from the Emperor. Of course it is looked upon as a great condescension by the old royalist party; perhaps even he is condemned, for Brittany is one of their strongholds, and they live together apart, and despise the present court and will take no office under the government. Henri V. is their king, they say, and they will recognise no other.'

'And what do you think?'

'Well, as to accepting appointments or going to court, I think every one must do as he thinks right; but I see no reason why they should not be thankful for the peace and order which France enjoys under the Emperor, and taking part in a "Te Deum" need not at all mean approval of all that he has done or does. Do you fancy that Daniel and the other Jews approved of all that went on in Babylon? and yet they were told to "seek the peace of the city and pray unto the Lord for it;" they had not gone there of their own free will, as we have come here, and I think there is no question at all that we are bound to pray for all the authorities, whoever and whatever they may be. The less well we think of them the more they need our prayers, don't they?'

'Yes; but he *is* a usurper, isn't he, and do you think that he ought to be emperor? If he were really a great, good man, would not he abdicate in favour of Henri Cinq?'

'My dear Fando,' said Cousin Hester, laughing, 'if you are going to ask such tremendous questions we shall all get out of our depth; and we had better keep them to talk over with my father. I don't know how the Emperor would keep Henri Cinq on the throne if he put him there, and I should think that any right-minded man would shrink from plunging his country into all the horrors of civil war. But you know that I am a matter-of-fact person, and I was thinking not about what ought to be, but what is, which seems to me quite enough for such little people as ourselves. We are the Emperor's subjects for the time being certainly, just as much as you are my father's subjects while you stay in his house; and you conform to the rules of the house, without asking to see the title-deeds of Plancöet. Of course you know him and trust him without thinking about it; and if you heard that he had turned out the de Beaumonts and taken unjust possession, of course you would not believe it; but even if you did not know him as well as you do, and fancied that it might be true, you would not think it your business to head a rebellion, I suppose? Dulcie, I am afraid you did get a chill last night; let me feel your hands—you must not be out again when those mists begin to rise, or you won't do us credit when Aunt Mary comes. Don't race about to please Judy more than is reasonable, there's a good child.'

'I'm quite well,' said Dulcie, bending her head lower over her work, and feeling very grateful to Fando, when she went on, 'I don't think I thought that we were the Emperor's subjects.'

'But are you not living under his government, protected by his laws, and bound to obey them? And what is that but being his subjects? His name is read in the English service, you know.'

'Yes, so it is! I daresay Dulcie is wondering what Monsieur Henri would say, aren't you, Dulcie?'

'Dear Fando, why should we "go to the villages" to buy bread when it is close at hand?'

'The villages?' repeated Fando, opening her eyes. 'I don't think I understand.'

'Well, Monsieur Henri was a good man; but the best make mistakes sometimes, and even if we could know his thoughts, is it not better to go to the fountain-head and ask what the King of kings would say, or rather has said, through his servants? Just consider what was the state of things when the Epistles to the Romans and to Timothy were written. The ruler of the whole civilised world then was Nero—whose name is proverbial for wickedness and cruelty—and St. Paul belonged to one of the many conquered nations over which he ruled; more than that, he belonged to the "chosen nation," the "holy people," and Nero and his governors were heathen, and yet he says: "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." And then again he directs that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life." I think that would include the Emperor, don't you?'

'Yes, it would; but still I don't quite understand. Of course the Emperor is better than Nero, for he does not persecute us.'

'And I suppose that any government is better than none. He most certainly is one of the "powers that be," and whatever his character, and however he reached the throne, his "*power* is of God," and will last just as long as He wills, and *no longer*, for it is He Who "ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will."'

'Then it would be the same if there were a republic?'

'Certainly'—but here Judy put her head in to say that there was a box come from England, would Cousin Hester have it taken upstairs?

'No, in the dining-room, please; come along and we will have it opened—it will be something to amuse us this wet afternoon, and I shall want you all to help with the contents. Uncle Russell was sending for some books, and I thought it would be a good opportunity to have a few things for Perrine's children. I want to give them, and two or three others, a little treat before we go away, and they will be pleased to have something from England. Thank you, Jack; now let us see whether you are handy enough to open it without splitting the lid.'

The box could not have arrived at a more opportune moment, for the 'boys' had nearly come to an end of their indoor amusements, and then there would have been a wail over the perversity of the weather, and a moan of 'What shall we do?' But as it was, the unpacking was a very interesting business, and Cousin Hester managed to keep them all employed while she explained her plans, and proposed that, as soon as the box was emptied, and they saw what there was, they should all set to work and take advantage of the rain. Meanwhile, Uncle Russell's books were carried up to him, together with a paper package which Judy said felt uncommonly as if it were a paint-box, or at least first cousin to one, only that it was too big, and she and Willie made sundry journeys to Nanon's room, to show her first one thing and then another.

'And now let us clear the table and fetch the paste and gum! I want you two boys each to make me a kite if you will, and see, here are the frames and calico, and plenty of gilt and coloured paper to make them very smart with; and then I want some dolls dressed. Fando, I know they are not very much in your way——'

'I should think not indeed,' said Judy, laughing; 'Fando's dolls are the dowdiest old Noah's ark things that ever were seen.'

'And *yours*, ma'am, are very apt to come to pieces.'

'Oh, yes; I know I'm not concise, like Fando,' said Judy, complacently.

'And you, Dulcie? Are you clever at dolls, I wonder?'

'I don't know—I don't think so; but I *like* dressing them.'

'Well, then, I daresay you do them very well; will you take this one, and I will find you some pieces directly.'

'And aren't I going to do anything?'

'Yes, to be sure, Willie. I have got quite a collection of little boxes, which I want you to make pretty for me, to hold sugar-plums. I think you could ornament them with coloured paper, if Judy will help you, and then we shall all be provided for.'

It would have been a good deal easier for Cousin Hester to do the work herself, for first one and then another wanted help and advice all the afternoon; but then they were all busy and happy, and pleased to think that they were helping her, and when Jack by-and-by remarked that, 'really, you know, it was very lucky that it had turned out wet, and he hoped it would not clear up too soon,' no doubt she felt rewarded.

It is a good thing to be independent—or, at least, to know how to be—but sometimes it is even better to know how to accept help, and set others to work.

Tea-time came long before it was expected; but, as Cousin Hester said, it was as well to leave something for the chance of another wet day; and, when Pauline's buck-wheat galettes made their appearance, smoking hot, appetites were not found to be wanting.

'Why, Dulcie, I shall have to appoint you "first dresser" to the dolls,' said Cousin Hester, as she looked at the result of her afternoon's work. '"*Do?*" I should think it would; it's capital—a real little English girl, and not a fine lady, which I hate as much in a doll as in real life! And now let us come out for a run on the road while the sun shines. If you don't look better to-morrow, Dulcie, I must see whether I can't doctor you; I don't like your being so white. Do you think you had better come out?'

It was all very well for Dulcie to protest that there was nothing the matter with her, but she certainly did not look well, or feel well; though she could not say that she had a cold or a chill, or any other malady with a name to it.

She was a good deal worried, and something that she had accidentally overheard that morning had not only made her more uncomfortable, but had also puzzled her not a little.

She was reading in the drawing-room, half hidden in one of the window-curtains, when Uncle Russell and Cousin Hester came in talking, and her attention was suddenly caught by the words, 'dame blanche,' and 'tower,' and then Uncle Russell remarked—

'It is singular certainly that they should have conjured her up just now; but it is quite possible that they may know of his being in the neighbourhood, and if they do, that would be enough to account for it. No, it will be better not to say anything. I wonder when he will be coming, I should like to know, that I may make sure——'

At this point it suddenly occurred to Dulcie that perhaps they did not see her, and she emerged from her hiding-place, awkwardly murmuring something about washing her hands for dinner, and beat a hasty retreat upstairs. But she had wondered all day what Uncle Russell could have meant, whether he really knew that Mr. Beaumont was in Dinan, and was coming to claim his rights, and above all, what he wanted to 'make sure of.' What could he be thinking of doing? He would not, of course, let Cousin Hester know, if it were anything bad, but then she might not understand, or she might be made to believe that he was an impostor. People did do such things, and perhaps Uncle Russell wanted to know when he was coming that he might have a gendarme ready in waiting to take him up. But at all events, even he thought it was 'singular' about the 'dame blanche,' and he would think it more singular still, probably, if he knew as much as she did. She puzzled over it at intervals all day, and she puzzled over it again as she undressed at night. But her reflections then were suddenly cut short by the sound of a shriek from upstairs, followed by much running to and fro.

Generally Fando's party were tolerably quiet, out of respect for Willie's slumbers; but to-night there was a revolt, and her remonstrances and entreaties were disregarded. For Judy had no sooner put the candle she was carrying down on Fando's table, than a hornet bounced in through the window, and went bouncing round the room in a decidedly alarming manner. Then Judy's shriek had brought Jack and Alick upon the scene, and now Jack was valiantly intent upon catching the intruder in his butterfly-net, since it was clearly impossible for any one to think of going to bed with it in the room.

'There, I've got it!' said he at last triumphantly, after an exciting chase.

'And there's Willie! I knew we should wake him!' said Fando going off to look after her charge, whom she found sitting up in bed, staring about him, but still only half awake, and shaking from head to foot.

'Why, Willie, what *is* the matter? There is nothing to be afraid of. It is only one of the hornets got in, and Jack has been catching it in his net, poor thing! Lie down again, and let me tuck you up,' said Fando, pulling the bed-clothes straight as she spoke.

'It's *white!*' gasped Willie, clinging to her with a burst of frightened crying.

'Oh, no, it isn't! Hornets are brown and yellow, you know. You've been dreaming, I think. See, here's Judy come to see what's the matter. Don't cry, there's a good boy.'

'Why, Willie, you are shaking like a jelly that's afraid of being eaten! Nobody's going to eat *you!* It was I that shrieked, you know; that didn't frighten you, did it? Well, I'm sorry, but you know you can't catch a hornet quite the same as a slug.'

'It's white!' said Willie again, with a sob.

'*What's* white? Here, wake up; I believe you are dreaming still. There, that's right, look about you. Now then, what have you been dreaming about?'

'It was in the avenue,' said Willie, a little more calmly, 'and Marie, said it—was the *dame blanche.*'

'Well, and if it was, who cares a straw about her?' said Judy irreverently; 'she didn't hurt you any way, did she now?'

'We runned away, me and Dulcie!'

'Oh! Dulcie was with you! Then it was last night, and *that* is what put the maids in such a fright. Did Dulcie see it?'

'I don't know, she said; perhaps it was an owl; but it didn't sing like an owl.'

'Oh! it sang, did it? And what did it look like?' persisted Judy, ignoring Fando's hints that it would be better to bring the conversation to a speedy close. But nothing more was to be got out of Willie except that it was white, and it was a long way off down the avenue, and that he had told Marie when he went to bed, and she had said it must be the *dame blanche* of Plancoët.

'Why in the world couldn't Dulcie say that was what made her come in last night?' began Judy indignantly, 'I believe she was frightened herself!'

'Yes, I b'lieve she was then,' said Willie, who was rapidly growing more cheerful, 'for she pinched my hand like anything.'

'Well, I daresay it was only a woman in a white cap,' said Fando, 'if it was so far off you know you couldn't tell, and Marie did not see it at all, and is very silly. You are not frightened now, are you, and you will go to sleep like a good boy? Well, then, Judy, will you go please, and I will wait here a few minutes,' said Fando, settling Willie in his bed, and then herself sitting down by his side and beginning to repeat one of his favourite 'moral songs,' appropriate to the occasion—

She has taken out the candle,
She has left me in the dark;
From the window not a glimmer,
From the fire-place not a spark.

(*To be continued.*)

AN EASTER GHOST.

IN TWO PARTS.

I.

EVERYONE will remember—or at least all 'parsons' folks' will—the long spell of bitter weather that preceded Easter in 1888. I say especially the 'parsons' folks,' which perhaps in this case means the 'parson's daughters,' because wintry weather during those particular weeks of the spring has to them the lamentable significance of an absolute dearth of flowers for their Easter decorations.

Of course I am not thinking of you grand town-people, who have a box in your churches for special offerings for flowers, and who, in a backward season, don't hesitate to give as much as a shilling for a single arum lily—no, I mean the simple country parson's daughters, in the lovely, but impoverished depths of those agricultural districts where the ecclesiastical finances are in an eternal state of bankruptcy, and where both the churchwardens would immediately expire in epilepsy, should it be suggested to them that a small contribution from the church funds—those funds sacred to light, coals, and flagrantly requisite repairs, would be of the greatest assistance in creating a properly floral effect on Easter morning.

So on a bad year the girls can only sigh, and resign themselves to the inevitable fate of being considered a disgrace to their parish, a sense of which is conveyed to them by catching some such remark as, 'Chutch bëant trimmed up long sight so well as most years, be ut?' Whereas, when Easter falls late, and when, with an abundance of flowers, and an uncommonly hard day's work, they have turned the Lenten bareness into a very paradise, of course it is wholesome for them to be reminded that at best they are only moderately successful, and a patronising ''Taint so bad!' is the highest commendation they ever expect. Do not suppose, however, that it is from this low level of congregational approbation or contempt only, that the parson's daughters regard the result of the decoration of their church, but still, apart from other considerations, they like to help in every way to associate the idea of brightness and gladness with the festival of Easter in their people's minds, and they cannot avoid a feeling of disappointment when the elements and the season seem to combine against them.

Two years ago, it was just awful! The snow that fell on Pancake Day—thereby enabling economical housewives to provide the orthodox dish without the extravagance of eggs—lay on the ground for five weeks afterwards, being accompanied all that time by hard frost and biting winds; what wonder then, that at the end of that period, everything, although within ten days of Easter, presented the appearance of mid-winter.

Even here, in the south, in our Valley of Duskeymere, the ground was as hard as iron, so that nothing could attempt to grow; and as for the poor birds, they were all starving, because never a worm or grub could get its nose through the solid crust of the earth. It used to seem to me almost unfeeling as every morning in the 'Benedicite' we called upon, 'O all ye fowls of the air' to sing praises and be joyful, when I knew that on my daily round to the different spots in the garden where I had established feeding-places, I should find many feathery corpses lying motionless, close under the bushes. Oh, it was a terrible time for the birds, that iron Lent of '88, the only comfort was that they had quite forgotten it by the evening of the first mild day, and were singing and flirting and thinking about their nests, and smacking their beaks over the anticipation of the early worm next morning, as if it had been spring always.

Unluckily the flowers had a much better memory for the long cold season, and it was with great reluctance that they peeped from under their protecting bed-clothes, and the primroses that did come shivering up, were few and far between, and, as we say in Duskeymere, very 'short-stemded.'

The consequence of all this was, that on Easter Eve, as Betty and I lingered behind the scant congregation after Evensong, contemplating the meagre result of our utmost efforts, we involuntarily whispered to each other, 'How miserable it all looks!' I think the Altar rails in our church must date from the time when they were first ordered to be placed in churches 'for the purpose of preventing dogs from desecrating the sanctuary,' for they are so very close together, and being of dark oak, they give a very sombre effect to the chancel. Generally we cover them with flowers and moss when they look well enough, but our scanty supplies this year had entirely defied any such floral prodigality as fifty and odd rails, so decorated would involve. Therefore, on this particular night, they looked so uncompromisingly heavy and bare, that it seemed as though they swallowed up every attempt at brightness which the flowers in other parts of the Church endeavoured to make.

'You know, Lil,' said Betty, with a doleful effort at consolation, as we went out at the south door, and groped our way in the darkness across the corner of churchyard and bit of lawn which separate our Church from the vicarage—'you know, if it weren't for those horrid rails, it really wouldn't be so bad, considering. Is there nothing that we could put on them to prevent them from catching the eye so egregiously?'

'Nothing,' I replied despondingly, 'we used every stalk.'

'I tell you,' she cried triumphantly, 'there are those Lent lilies that we went out to Pentridge nearly a week ago to get—of course, how could I have forgotten them!'

'But, Betty, they're only buds, they are no use.'

'Nonsense, I put them in warm water and pulled their petals open ruthlessly, and though they won't be very good, they are much better than nothing. Quick, Lil, let's pick some berberis leaves and gardener's grass, and tie up a bunch for the middle of each alternate rail, and then we can run into church with them after supper.'

It was pitch dark, being after 8 P.M., but, following her suggestion, we floundered together across a long border backed by shrubs, of which we knew every leaf so well, that by instinct we could tear tough sprays off the berberis that grew all along it. Armed with these and some graceful ribbons of gardener's grass, we hurried into the house, and with Betty's Lent lilies—rather pale and drawn-looking, I must own—and a little wire, we laid out twenty-five not untasteful bunches, on our schoolroom-table by the time the bell rang for supper.

That somewhat hasty meal concluded, we slipped out through the garden-door, each carrying a candle with a glass shade, and a big tin tray, on which were spread out the twenty-five—as you might call them—*posthumous* bunches of flowers. It was raining a little, and the candles sputtered and flickered remonstratingly, so that we were thankful to find them still alight when we reached the shelter of the porch.

We entered the Church softly—how very ghostly it looked and felt! The tall piers and arches seeming to advance to meet us as the faint light from our candles fell upon the white stone, and the dim outlines of the seats, with their long, attendant shadows appearing to chase each other into the gloom of the transepts, as we crept with rather a scared, eerie sensation up the Nave into the Chancel.

I don't know what Betty felt; for my part, when, after placing our candles on the ground, we knelt on the Altar step, and began to fasten our flowers upon the rails—my fingers trembled so, that I could hardly twist the wires!

The stillness in the great Church was quite awful, and what might there not be in its mysterious black recesses! I thought of the brasses and monuments on the walls, and wondered whether the ghosts of the past generations who had worshipped here, and were buried outside, might not be gathering in the quiet and darkness, to share in the expectation of Easter! It was raining heavily too, and the steady downpour on the roof was very suggestive of the stealthy fall of myriads of light footsteps.

We had nearly finished when the silence was broken by loud and somewhat rough voices proceeding from the path which ran all round the Church, separated only from the churchyard by high iron railings. We started as the chancel-door was noisily tried by one of the uproarious party, and we felt thankful that it proved to be locked, as we had no fancy for a nocturnal visit, in almost complete darkness, from what sounded like Saturday-night carousers who had been enjoying the first-fruits of their week's wages, at the 'Pig and Bellows' not far off. They seemed to hold a discussion outside for a few moments, and then moved off, their voices dying away in the distance—we thought no more of them, but, hastily finishing the arrangement of our flowers, and holding the candles for a moment over our heads to judge of the improved effect—we picked up the big trays and made our way quickly down the nave to the south door, our speed being a little accelerated by a loud 'squrch' emitted by the clock, two or three minutes previous to its striking the hour.

I was in front, Betty a couple of yards behind me. As I reached the door and opened it, I fancied I heard the clash of the heavy iron gate by which the churchyard is entered from the west, but being fully occupied in edging my square tray through the rather narrow doorway, I paid no heed to the sound till a confused murmur of voices and hasty steps on the gravel, caught my ear.

'Betty!' I whispered sharply, 'blow out your light, quick! for your life! those men are coming in! Quick!—across to the churchyard!'

In half a second our lights were out, and we had literally only time to slip out at one side of the wide, old porch, kindly aided by the blackness of the night, before an excited crowd of men rushed in. I suppose my nerves were unstrung from the ghostliness of the silent Church, or else I can hardly account for the terror that seized me, for I felt as if our lives had been but just saved, when, after stumbling wildly for a few yards in pitch darkness, among grave-mounds and bushes, through long wet grass, while a drenching rain descended upon us, Betty whispered—

'Lil, where are you? Let's wait on this flat stone, they'll never find us, and we shall be able to hear what they want.'

Panting, we crouched down on the stone, and as I tried to still the beating of my heart that I might catch what they were saying, it suddenly flashed across me what it meant. *Of course*, they had seen the light from our candles, as they passed along outside the Church, and had tried the chancel door to ascertain who was inside; failing to effect an entrance and still observing the faint light through the windows, they must have hurried round to the clerk's house, by means of whom, armed with his keys, they had gained access to the churchyard through the west gate.

Their eagerness for action appeared to die away unaccountably on entering the porch, and their loud, confident voices were so subdued that we could only catch a few words here and there, though the suggestion of 'ghostes' was frequently repeated. Some one appeared to have a theory which the others seemed unwilling to receive, but there was a tacit and general disinclination to venture inside the door. At last, one voice, from apparently the hindmost of the little crowd, was raised above the rest—

'Ghostes, or no ghostes, I do know as we seed a light inside Chutch; and where (whether) 'tis there now or no, I do think as Johnny Inkpen, bein' clerk, and, as you mid say, responsible for the Chutch, did ought to go in and see what 'twer.'

At this downright expression of opinion there was a short silence—and I really feared they must have heard Betty chuckle—then the rather quavering voice of Johnny Inkpen was heard replying—

'I dount believe as any of ye seed nothin'—'tis all a pack o' nonsense; but in course I'll go in, jus' to make sure. No one cain't say as I be afeared to go in Chutch 'cos 'tis dark!'

The group apparently opened with alacrity to give him free access to the door; but, just as we heard the handle turning, there was a general exclamation—

'Aw! what be that?'

'Goo on, ye girt fools!' was Johnny's reply, in a tone gruff from extreme alarm and vexation at being forced by public opinion into this very unpleasant position. 'Thic be only the clock; he be a-gwine to strike!' and it accordingly began to chime a quarter to ten.

A trifle reassured by this one natural phenomenon in the midst of so much that was inexplicable, Johnny was again urged forward, and in the perfect stillness that ensued, his hesitating steps could be distinctly heard proceeding with great caution up the aisle.

At this moment of breathless tension, by bad luck, my tray, which was heavy, and which, in my cramped position, I found it difficult to hold at all, slipped, and struck with a hollow, metallic sound upon the stone beneath.

There was a sudden chorus of horrified whispers.

'What be that?' 'Whatever be ut?' 'They be out in chutchyard!' 'Aw now!' and one or two even darted out of the porch, with the evident intention of immediate flight; but, finding they were not followed by the rest of their valiant friends, they crept back again, deeming it the less evil to share the general peril, than to encounter alone the unknown terrors of the dark churchyard lying between them and safety.

And now a really ghostly thing happened, which was never afterwards accounted for, and which, therefore, confirmed the parish in the idea that spirits of some kind had certainly been abroad that night. The clock, instead of chiming six times, as it ordinarily does at the quarter preceding each hour, went on striking 7–8–9–10–11, faster and faster, as if itself terrified at what it was doing, until—as someone whose nerves were sufficiently steady to allow them to keep count, afterwards informed me—it had struck nearly *fifty* times

Well, this, in the present position of affairs, was alarming if you like, and though it was not immediately noticed by the crowd in the porch, so anxiously were they awaiting the result of Johnny's expedition, one of them soon exclaimed, 'Hark to thiccy clock! What in sense be it at?' which was quickly followed by a frightened whisper of, ''Tis the ghostes! They must have gone down in belfry, and be a-pullin' of the ropes!'

Now at this moment, as if things were not bad enough, and when each man was, as it were, poised in mid air, doubting whether he could endure any longer without taking to his heels, what did that wretched Betty do but clatter her tray down upon the stone, and, when there, keep tipping it up and down till it made noise enough to wake the dead. With one consent there was an instantaneous stampede from the porch, every one scuffling and hustling past his neighbour, only determined that, whatever happened, he would not be the hindmost—natural instinct, even in this hurry, reminding him of the old saying concerning that unlucky person and the devil!

Such a hasty flight in pitch darkness was naturally attended with danger, and we could hear some go full tilt against the buttress at the corner of the tower, several more tumble over each other and go sprawling on the ground, while others, missing the gate, went literally head over heels across a low railing of posts with chains between, which divided the pathway from the churchyard. Still, such speed did terror lend them that, despite every mischance, one and all were out of the gate and out of hearing before you could count five.

Not so poor Johnny Inkpen, however, of whom no one stopped to think; and as soon as I had forced Betty to put down her tray—which I did the first moment I could speak for laughing—we heard his trembling voice apparently still inside the Church.

'Jem Penny! Jem Penny! Bill Fudge! For heaven's sake. do'ee some of 'ee stop for I! I cain't never find the way by meself! Wherever be the door now? Ha' mussy! Ha' mussy! Avaunt ye spirits! Jus' wait till I be out, and I'll leave the door open for ye! Where in thunder have I a-put my keys to? They've carried 'em off, I'll be sworn! And that clock, too! Sure my last hour's come, and that's a sign! Oh!—oh! whatever shall I do?'

After which ejaculations, uttered in the extremity of fright, he, by good fortune, suddenly stumbled through the doorway for which he had been seeking, and, once finding himself outside, abandoned Church, keys, and all clerkly responsibilities, and took to his heels even faster than the rest.

We shook with laughter for some time, our expedition had ended so very ridiculously; but, bethinking ourselves of the late hour, and the fact that we were pretty nearly wet through, we picked up our candlesticks and trays, and made our way, with some difficulty, over the grave mounds, and among the stones, and finally in at our own door.

'Lil,' said Betty, 'this will be a fine tale all over the place to-morrow; I only trust no one will suspect us of being the ghosts!'

II.

THE next morning was brilliantly fine—an ideal Easter Day—and our decorations looked better than we could have hoped; but Betty and I found it hard to suppress a smile as our eyes fell upon the flowers on the altar-rails, which had unwittingly caused so much alarm.

We longed, and yet dreaded to hear the events of last night described by some one; but when my Father came in after service without making the slightest allusion to anything unusual, we felt that that *some one* would not be Johnny Inkpen, which, perhaps, was hardly likely, considering that no great credit could be reflected on him from the affair.

However, by the afternoon my curiosity could no longer be restrained, so I went off to visit an old Mrs. Cluett—a great gossip and friend of mine—from whom, sure enough, I soon heard a full account of all that had taken place.

'Well, me dear, an' I s'pose you've heard about the ghostes last night?'

'What ghosts?' I replied, a little hypocritically.

'Not heerd of the ghostes down Church last night? Why, 'tis all over town! 'Twer a cur'ous thing too; I'll jus' tell ee how 'twer. My Jem, as do work out to Ambrus Fish's—you do know Ambrus Fish, leastways, they do mostly call 'un Loo Fish, 'cos a did put up a little shed-plëace on the "loo" side of a hedge when a wer' a young chap—well, my Jem wer' comin' home 'long of a lot of young fellers as had been, I be sorry to say, at the "Pig and Bellus," and they wer' late, proper late, and so they come* on round chutchyard, as 'twer shorter by a good bit; they bëant fond of goin' round by the graves after dark, but there, they wer' late. When they get so far as chancel door, my Jem, he says, "Whatever be they doin' in Chutch this time o' night; cain't ye see a light in there?" But 'twer a queer sort o' light; not like the gas might be.

'"Cain't be no one there now," says 'Manuel (Emmanuel) Goddard, who was 'long of him. "Chutch been out these two hour an' more." ("Church is out," being a local expression signifying "service is over.")

'"Well," says Jem, "I do think as we'd best run down Johnny Inkpen's, and tell un of it; maybe there's summut a-fire. So, Granny," he says, "we went on so quick's anything, an' I run in to Johnny's and says to un, 'Chutch be a-fire, bring on the keys!' 'Never a-fire?' says he, 'Yes, a be,' says I; 'leastways, we seen a light and flames an' that, in there!'" (But that were only his way o' puttin' of it, 'cos they never see no flames, you know). "So, Johnny, he bring on the keys, and we all run down chutchyard so slick as we could, for 'twer turble" (terrible, a favourite superlative) "dark, and he unlock the gate an' we goes in. There wer' the light, sure enough, still shinin' and when we come close agin the Chutch I clomb up 'long of a water-pipe, and clemmed on by my fingers to the window, so as I could see in for a minute. And, Granny, whatever do ee think 'twas as I seed? Why, right down Chutch, there come a long procession o' ghostes, all on 'em carryin' corpse-candles in their hands—that's what 'twer as made the light—an', so sure as I be a livin' sinner,"—"I be sure of that, Jem," says I—"they was the ghostes of all them as had died in the las' year!"

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* In Duskeymere dialect we always use the present tense in the place of the past: e.g. he come on with me yesterday—she give me that book twenty years ago.

'"Mussy!" says I, 'cos I wer' took all of a heap like, to think o' such a thing. "Mussy!" I says. "You doun't never mean to say that, Jem?"

'"Yes, Granny, I does," says he; "an' I'll tell ee who was the first of 'em, and that wer' ole Liza Upshall—you do mind ole Liza, her as used to carr' out they little cëakes to sell on a tray?—I know'd she directly I seen her, 'cos she had the tray 'long of her; but there, I couldn't see where (whether) there wer' any cëakes on it or no. An' all the rest on 'em come after her, with the light a-shinin' on their white faces so plain's anything."

'"An' who else did ee see, Jem?" says I, 'cos I did think as my brother's wife might ha' been wi' 'em, and I should ha' been turble glad to know where the poor soul look a bit more cheerful nor she used to; she wer' always so down-hearted like, 'cos she wer' a dear sufferer for years afore she died. But my Jem, he says, "No, Granny, I couldn't see no more of 'em not as you mid say to put the names to 'em, 'cos you see, Granny, the windows was all wet wi' rain an' that, and I couldn't clem on with my hands more nor a minute; but there, I know'd ole Liza d'reckly, 'cos 'o the tray, an' she come a-walkin' on jus' as she used to round town o' market days."

''Twer a funny thing too, me dear,' continued old Granny Cluett, 'about thic tray, how she come to have it 'long of her, 'cos when the ole soul died, the tray he did go to her daughter Betsy. You do know Betsy Topp, me dear, don't ee? As do live out Long Close? An' I seen it down her 'ouse, many's the time, when I jus' look in to pass the time o' day, and turble useful it been to her, as she often say to me, to carr' out her bits o' washin' and that. But there, we can't 'spect to understand the ways o' ghosts! Why, 'tis summut quite new to hear tell on 'em being seen Easter time. We do know as they be allays about Hallow Eve; and ole Christmas Eve there be all sorts o' things seen—the oxen a-kneeling in their stalls, all round in a ring, as my ole man have a-seen 'em lots and lots o' times, when he wer' a young chap and work out to Pentridge. But of Easter Eve —— No, I niver hear tell of any one ever seein' of 'em. And if they can come an' go, when an' how they do like, I doun't see why they cain't take an' carr' on a tray if they be so minded!'

'Well, Granny,' I said, anxious to recall my old friend's thoughts from the numerous by-paths into which they so easily deviated; 'did Jem see them again after he got down from the window?'

'Well, I wer' jus' a-goin' to tell ee. Jem went on round in porch, where t'other chaps was all a-waiting, and none of 'em didn't seem turble keen on goin' into Chutch. And when Jem tells 'em what he seen, Caleb Frizzle spakes up an' says, "Then they was just a-comin' out at porch as I wer' gwine in. I seen the light a-shinin' on the stones, an' then all of a minute he wer' blown out, an' I felt as if summut went skimmerin' past me out in grave-yard, an' that's where they be gone to now, you be sure."

'However, Granny, Johnny Inkpen wouldn't listen to none of it, said 'twer all a pack o' nonsense, an' as how there weren't nothin' in Chutch nor out; so they says to un, "goo on in then," they says, "and see what 'twer as made thic light."

'He didn't seem to fancy goin' in much more nor the rest of 'em, but as he wer' clerk, an' they sort of dared un to it, he go in, and they all waits at the door so as they should hear where he see anything or no. Soon as he wer' bit o' ways up aisle, if Chutch clock doun't begin to strike, and how a kep' on!'

'There, me dear, s'pose you heerd un down Vicarage? My ole man an' me, we was jus' gone to bed—we do allays go on early of Saturday nights—an' "Aw, Job," says I, "whatever be that?"

'"Whatever be what?" says he.

'Menfolk be that owl-headed, they be snorin' so soon as iver they do clap ear to pillow-cloth.'

'"Why, thiccy clock, or bell, or summut," says I, "jus' hark how a be keppin' on! I do hope as the Queen beant dead!"

'Cos ye see, me dear, I did mind when the Prince Albert died, an' we never know nothin' of it till we hear the bell a-tollin'.'

'"The Queen," says Job, scornful-like. "She be so safe in her bed as you be in yourn, I'll warrant. So, for mussy's sake, do 'ee lave talkin' an' goo on to sleep."

'An' he set to a-snorin', but there I couldn't sleep for best part an hour, thinkin' on that bell an' wonderin' who twer a sign for.'

'It was very odd indeed, Mrs. Cluett,' said I. 'No one seems to know why it did it. But what did Jem and the others think of it?'

'Why, me dear, they was *proper* frightened, and Jem he do say if he'd not been afeard to goo by hisself, he'd a-runned for his life. But there, the others, I s'pose, thought as they mus' wait for Johnny Inkpen, as he'd gone in 'long of himself. So they only called out to un in a loud sort o' a whisper, "Johnny," they says, "look sharp do ee! What do ee see? Be there anythin' there? Be sharp now, cos we be goin' on!" But afore he could gi' 'em any answer, there come a girt noise from out among the gravestones, so loud—there most so loud as if any one had took an' fired a gun, but 'twar more like a chain rattlin', and they thought as the ghostes was a-comin' back, and so they all cut an' run for their lives! But 'twer just about dark, and there, me dear, I couldn't help laughin' when I hear how they all go tumblin' over each other, and up against tower, and not able to find the gëate, an' our Jem, he ketch his foot in thiccy little scraper anigh the porch, and down he go right on his face, but up again, an' off as if the devil hisself wer' behind un. An' Jane tell me —that be Jem's mother, ye know—as she wer' jus' in next door, to ole Sally Northover's—she'd do mostly poppy in there last thing o' nights, to see where the poor ole soul want anythin' or no—when she hear some one run past the window, so quick 's lightning. So she go in to see where 'twere Jem come home—she'd been 'spectin' un this good bit—but she couldn't see un nowhere, till she go on upstairs an' look in his room, and there he wer', gone clean in bed, and wi' all the bed-clothes a-pulled down tight over his head.'

'"Jem," she says, skeard-like, "whatever be come to ee?"

'"Oh, mother!" he says, peepin' out at her, "mother, I wer' sure as the ghostes was after I!"'

'An' there he tell her all about it, like he tell me this mornin'.'

'"An' Granny," he says, "I've been and made a girt vow."

'"So do ee, my son," says I, "so do ee." Cos I thought as he meant as he'd goo an' tak' the pledgo, and never be kep' out late at the "Pig an' Bellus" no more to see such sights, an' that—but there, 'twer no such thing.'

'"Granny," he says, "I've made made a girt vow as I'll niver goo roun' chutchyard again, after dark, so long as I do live!"'

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And as Betty and I have discreetly kept our own counsel, I think Jem's vow has every chance of being rigidly adhered to.

A. LOWNDES.

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCLXXIII.

1704–1708.

THE UNION.

THE reign of Queen Anne was a period of doubt and uncertainty. There is hardly anything in it really pleasant to contemplate, either in events or characters. The good men who existed, such as the saintly Thomas Wilson, afterwards Bishop of Sodor and Man, were mostly kept in the background. The principal sees had been filled by William and Mary with political supporters, and it was chiefly in the ranks of the priesthood that strong Church feeling existed, and this was mistrusted as connected with Toryism and Jacobitism.

The first ministry and first Parliament of Anne had been of a Tory complexion, but this meant, besides devotion to the Crown, an inclination to the Stewarts, and a dislike to the war, whose purpose was avowedly to humble France. The Whigs, on the contrary, were resolved against the young Chevalier, determined to maintain and increase the liberties of the people, and to pursue the advantages already gained in the war, so as to prevent the ambition of Louis XIV. from threatening the freedom they valued.

It became evident that the Tory ministry could no longer keep out the Whigs. The election of 1705, when the Triennial Parliament had to break up, increased the Whig strength, and five strong and able Whig ministers were well-nigh forced on Queen Anne in coalition with Godolphin. These were Somers, Wharton, Oxford, Halifax, and Sunderland. The Queen was greatly annoyed.

'Why,' she wrote, 'must I, who have no end, no thought, but for the good of my country, be made so miserable as to be brought into the power of one set of men?'

She implored Godolphin to save her from Sunderland, whom both he and she equally distrusted and dreaded; but he showed her that unless the Whigs were satisfied by their leaders being in office, they were strong enough to prevent any measure of government from being carried out, and that he must himself resign if she refused them. The Duchess of Marlborough likewise bullied her 'dear Mrs. Morley' on behalf of her son-in-law, Sunderland, and showed her hatred to Rochester, the Queen's uncle. Finally, Anne was forced to yield, Rochester and Nottinghan resigned, and the Coalition Cabinet was formed, including Sunderland, with Cowper for Lord Keeper, but retaining Godolphin at the head, and Harley, still a Tory, as Secretary of State.

The Queen was greatly mortified, and never again had entirely the same feelings either for Godolphin or the Duchess; but the nation was satisfied, and the war was vigorously carried on.

Most important measures with regard to Scotland were at the same time under consideration. By the Act of Settlement passed by the English Parliament in 1700, the Crown had been entailed, failing direct heirs of William III. or of Anne, upon those of the Electress Sophia of Hanover; but this did not bind the Scottish Parliament, who felt themselves at liberty to disregard it altogether, so that it was quite possible for them to keep to the regular line, take James VIII., as many were disposed to call him, for their King, and thus separate the two kingdoms again.

Queen Anne's reign was felt to be a sort of respite in which to come to a decision. There were three strong parties in Scotland—the Jacobites, or Tories, who were for the young Stewart at any cost, the Whigs, who were equally strong for the Protestant succession, and what was called the Country party, who did not wish for James Francis and all that his accession involved, but did not choose to be dictated to by England, and had been further exasperated by the quashing of a scheme, chiefly through English jealousy, of a grand trading settlement on the Isthmus of Darien.

The Marquis of Tweeddale and the Duke of Hamilton, who were the heads of this Country party, led the Parliament, and nearly the whole population, in declaring that unless the Scots were allowed to colonise and trade on equal terms with the English, nothing should induce them to agree to the Act of Settlement; and they showed themselves ready to abide the consequences, even amounting to separation and warfare. An Act of Security was brought forward, to place the Government, in case of Queen Anne's death, in the hands of the Scottish Parliament, who were to choose a Protestant successor of the royal line, on condition of supporting the honour and independence of the Scottish Crown. Nor were the two kingdoms to have the same sovereign, unless the Scots were admitted to fully equal privileges in trade and navigation with the English. To maintain these pretensions, all the male population of fit age was to be drilled and trained to arms.

The Act was passed in the House of Parliament, but the Queen's Commission refused the assent, without which it was invalid. Then the Parliament refused to grant supplies, and there were loud cries of 'Liberty before Subsidy,' after which there was an adjournment. Jacobite plots were in agitation, and were betrayed by Simon Lovat, one of the greatest mischief-makers of the time, and confusion was made worse confounded.

In this state of things, the sagacious Lord Godolphin persuaded the Queen and his fellow ministers that the only way to bring about the Union, or to be in condition to resist an outburst of the Highland clans, would be to consent at once to the Act of Security, so that there might be no reasonable ground of present hostility to her in Scotland, and likewise that the English might be convinced that there was absolute danger in not conciliating the northern nation, whom they were too apt to despise. Thus the Bill was passed, and the drilling and martial exercises of the Scots immediately put in hand, to the great wrath and indignation of the English. The Parliament of 1704 passed regulations against Scottish trade, and ordered the English towns on the border to be fortified and guarded, and the militia of the northern counties to be called out. In the meantime, at the request of the East India Company, a Scottish vessel prepared for the Indian voyage was detained in the Thames, and by way of reprisals the Scottish Government seized an English trader called the *Worcester*, which had been forced by stress of weather to put into the Firth of Forth. It was a suspicious vessel, with a numerous crew, and such a quantity of arms and ammunition, that there was every reason to suspect the crew of being buccaneers; and one of the men, named Haynes, who had been drinking freely on shore, talked of his horror at the wickedness that he said he had seen perpetrated on board. This led to an arrest of all the persons in the *Worcester*, and their examination, when a black slave of Green the Captain, deposed that on the Coromandel coast, near Calicut, the *Worcester* had boarded and captured a ship with a red flag, with an English-speaking crew, who had been thrown overboard, and the ship sold to a native merchant. Another black man had not seen the capture, but had been told of it, and the surgeon, who had been on shore, said he had heard great guns at sea, and seen the *Worcester* come into harbour towing another vessel, which was sold to a native merchant. The *Worcester* had goods on deck, and wounded men below, but he was forbidden to ask questions about either; and a fourth witness declared that Green had shown him a seal, with the arms of the Scottish African and Indian Company. It happened that a Scottish vessel of the unfortunate Darien Company, called the *Rising Sun*, had been lost at sea, and it was immediately concluded that this was the unfortunate vessel described by the black, and accordingly Green, and his crew, fifteen in all, were tried before the Scottish High Court of Admiralty, and on the evidence of this negro, and of Haynes, and the hearsay report of the surgeon and two more, were all found guilty. The Government were inclined to petition the Crown for a reprieve, but the Edinburgh mob were in such a fury that the Council were intimidated, and Green, with his mate and one more, were taken to Leith for execution, pelted, abused, and treated with the most unmanly violence by the populace all along the way to their death, denying the charge to the last. The rest were released after a long imprisonment, and there was later evidence that if there had really been a murdered crew, it was certainly not that of the *Rising Sun*, which had been lost on the coast of Madagascar, and the crew destroyed by the natives, all except the Captain, who was afterwards met and identified.

The English were deeply offended by these proceedings, and they afforded fresh fuel to the hatred already existing between the two nations; but, on the other hand, it was plain that nothing could so effectively prevent such things as putting an end to the separate Legislature; and consent was obtained from both Parliaments for the appointment of Commissioners from each nation to consider of the means of accomplishing the Union. These were the men of highest rank and station in each kingdom, and they had for their secretary Daniel Defoe, who left a full account of the proceedings. The chief difficulty, setting aside the old animosities, was caused by that English jealousy respecting trade, which imagined that competition would be ruinous, and could not endure that Scottish traffic with the colonies should be on equal terms with their own. Yet it was plain that a war between the two nations would be more mischievous to trade than anything else could be. Paterson exerted himself earnestly in favour of the Union, and wrote pamphlet after pamphlet to clear away misapprehensions from the two nations, and notes for Lord Godolphin's better understanding.

The Commissioners agreed that there should be only one parliament, treating the two countries as one nation, and that English taxation should be adjusted to include the Scots. Also, the Scots were to retain their Presbyterian establishment, their own Law Courts, and municipal and civil legislature. So far all the Commissioners agreed, but when the English proposed that in the House of Lords only a thirteenth of the Scottish noblemen, elected by the rest of the number, should sit, there was an outburst of displeasure. The proportion would thus be sixteen, and the Commissioners of rank themselves were pacified by the promise of English peerages to admit themselves and their heirs; and, moreover, a large sum was assured to all concerned.

When the Articles of the Union were published there was a tremendous outcry in Scotland. The old national hatred and pride actuated everyone. The Presbyterians thought that their worship would be oppressed by a Parliament where Bishops sat; the Jacobites saw a bar being raised to the return of the Stewarts; the Highland chiefs foresaw the fall of their patriarchal power. There was a general burst declaring that Scotsmen would be Scotsmen still, and that the Commissioners were no better than traitors; and Defoe, who made a journey into Scotland, was amused at the sight of the Jacobite and the Covenanter fused together and making common cause.

The Scottish Parliament to decide on the matter was to meet on the 2nd of October, 1706, and Edinburgh was in a ferment. There were three parties in the Parliament—the Union party, led by the Duke of Queensbury, Lord High Commissioner; the Earl of Mar, Secretary of State, and the Earl of Stair; against the Union was the Duke of Hamilton, with a very large number of both Jacobites and Whigs; but, like all the former Hamiltons, he was vacillating and afraid of losing his estates; and there was likewise a middle, or uncertain party, called the Squadron volante, headed by the Marquis of Tweeddale.

The populace was in a very agitated state, especially when a fast day was proclaimed, and there was preaching one way or the other in all the Kirks. It was reported that the Regalia of Scotland were to be carried to England, and everyone in Edinburgh was invited 'by a great personage' to go up to the Castle to see the crowns and swords for the last time before they were ravished from them. The Duke of Queensbury and his colleagues were followed to and from the Parliament House with hootings and curses, while Hamilton, who had to be carried in a chair on account of some lameness, was escorted by a multitude with shouts of applause.

The worst day was the 23rd of October, when the sittings had been rather late, and an enormous mob had collected to cheer the Duke of Hamilton. Instead of going as usual to Holyrood Palace, he turned up the Lawn Market to go to the house of his friend, the Duke of Atholl. Close to this lived Sir Patrick Johnstone, the ex-Provost, a Commissioner for the Treaty of Union, and as the Duke went into Atholl's house the mob fell upon Sir Patrick with great fury, trying to break the door open to murder him. Lady Johnstone came to the window with a candle in each hand that she might be known, and called for the town guard.

An apothecary ran to fetch them, but they would not stir without the Provost's orders. Happily these were obtained in time to rescue Sir Patrick; but the rioters continued to break the windows of the Unionists, to insult such as they met, and to put out the lights. Defoe had a blow on his head while looking out of the window, for the mob prevented any lights in these for fear that they should be recognised and informed against. A thousand seamen were said to be coming up from Leith to join them, and the Duke of Queensbury sent for the Guards, but these could not be brought into the city without special permission from the Provost, and their presence was a thing unprecedented. However, at one o'clock at night they were marched in, and the mob at length dispersed. Three regiments were kept in the city, and provided escorts for the Commissioners and other obnoxious members; but the Duke of Hamilton and his friends continued to be cheered on their way by the disorderly multitude.

Glasgow, Perth, Dumfries, and other places were all in a state of disturbance. At Dumfries, two or three hundred Cameronians burnt the Articles of the Union, and with them the list of Commissioners, and it was reported at Edinburgh that they were rising in thousands, as probably they would have done, but that their leader, James Hepburn, dreaded the Jacobites too much to unite with them.

The General Assembly also perceived greater safety for the Kirk in being united to the English than there could be while there was a chance of Scotland giving herself to the Stewarts.

In the Scottish Parliament, now meeting under a military guard, there were hot debates. Fletcher of Saltoun declared that Scotland had been betrayed by the Commissioners, and Lord Beehaven made a long and eloquent speech on the past greatness of Scotland, and the need of combining to secure that she should still preserve honour, respect, and independence. Lord Marchmont, however, disposed of the speech by pronouncing that it only needed a short answer—'Lo, when I awoke, I found it was a dream.' Other orators showed that Scotland could never have free scope till the restrictions caused by a separation were removed. The Scots would have accepted a federal union not unwillingly, and many of the English ministers would have agreed to this; but Lord Somers was firm, and carried the day—complete union or none.

The Duke of Hamilton had proposed that all his party should make a strong protest for the federal union, and then secede from the Parliament, when it would be impossible to carry on the affair; but he quarrelled over this with the Duke of Atholl, and then suddenly withdrew his opposition, in consequence, according to his family papers, of a letter from Lord Middleton, Secretary of State of the young Chevalier, desiring him not to resist any longer, as the young James wished to oblige his sister, and hoped one day to restore Scotland to her independence. Hamilton's energies seemed paralysed by this intimation. Moreover, £20,000 was sent to be judiciously distributed, under cover of remuneration for the losses in the Darien scheme. The strong opponents of the Union saw themselves deserted, and ceased to attend the sittings, and the Treaty of Union was finally accepted by a majority of 110. The last act of this last Parliament of Scotland was a vote of thanks to Paterson, and on the 25th of March, 1707, it rose, to meet no more.

One stipulation was that the Regalia should never be removed from Scotland; but, in the fear that the sight of them should excite the people, they were shut up in a strong room in Edinburgh Castle, where they were so entirely out of sight that the place was forgotten, and their existence doubted for more than a century, when the influence of Sir Walter Scott obtained from George IV. that search should be made for them, and they were, to the extreme delight of that great lover of all things Scottish, brought to light, reset, and placed where they can be seen, in a room in the Castle.

The Chancellor Seafield, when the final dissolution took place in April, gave great offence by observing—

'There was an end of an auld sang.'

The English Parliament, in the meantime, held their debates. One member said that this Union was like marrying a woman without her own consent. Others disapproved of the acceptance of the Presbytery. One peer objected to the exclusion of so many Scottish Lords from Parliament, another to the admission of so many as sixteen; but none of the objections were consistently maintained; the Treaty of Union was accepted in both Houses, and Queen Anne gave her assent on the 4th of March, 1707. The 24th of April was the last day of the sitting of a separate English Parliament.

The Queen was, all this time, in much anxiety about her husband, whose health was fast declining, and who suffered from asthma. The power which the Duchess of Marlborough had exercised over her for so many years was beginning to be strained to the uttermost, as the Duchess, growing more and more triumphant in her husband's victories, domineered unbearably. Anxious to supply his needs, she hardly permitted the Queen to have any money for her own spending, and she made no secret of her hostility to the Union, apparently because the moderate Tories were desirous of it; and she used all her influence to obtain from the Queen appointments of Whig and usually Low Church Bishops.

Among the relations whom the great lady had patronised was Abigail Hill, for whom she obtained an appointment as bed-chamber woman, thus bringing her into closer contact with the Queen than the attendants of higher rank. Abigail slept close to the royal bed-chamber, and helped Anne, who was a most devoted wife, to nurse the Prince during his nightly sufferings. She was a gentle, soft-mannered person, and of the same sentiments as the Queen in matters of Church and State, and Anne soon became so fond of her as to excite the jealousy of her 'Mrs. Freeman,' who felt by no means gratified when she had to attend her Majesty on the 24th of April, 1707, to return thanks at St. Paul's for the Union of the kingdoms.

Probably it was from sheer dread of the wrath of the Duchess, that when soon after Abigail married Samuel Masham, one of the pages, it was done privately, though in the presence of the Queen herself, in Dr. Arbuthnot's lodgings. The Queen presented the bride with a handsome sum from her privy purse, and the Duchess's suspicion being thus excited, the discovery was made, and there was a furious uproar at the faithlessness of Mrs. Morley, and the ingratitude of Abigail Hill. The Secretary of State, Mr. Harley, one of the few strong Tories remaining in the Cabinet, was a friend of Mrs. Masham's, and this was an additional cause of distrust. Harley had thought a dissolution of the English Parliament needful to admit the Scotch addition; but this was overruled, and in October, 1707, the first Parliament of Great Britain met, with forty-five Scotch members in the House of Commons, and sixteen peers in the House of Lords; but the noblemen who had English peerages in addition to their Scotch ones were for that time excluded.

There was great discontent in Scotland, but for the time it exhaled itself in political ballads.

'Fareweel to a' our Scottish fame,
Fareweel our ancient glory;
Fareweel e'en to our Scottish name,
Sae famed in martial story.

Now Sark rins o'er the Solway sands,
And Tweed rins to the ocean,
To mark where England's province stands,
Sic a parcel of rogues in a nation.'

A longer ballad was on the 'Auld Grey Mare' which endured a great deal from her master, but finally grew desperate, and—

'O wae be to the mare,
And to her haill countree;
I wish I had let her rin,
As wild as wild could be.

The mare she scaped awa'
Frae among the deadly stour;
And scampered hame to him
Who aught her ance before.'

Just at this time Harley's secretary, Gregg, was found guilty of traitorous correspondence with the French, and his master was supposed to be implicated. There was great disturbance in Parliament, especially when the Queen was reported to have sent her physician with comforts to the unfortunate Gregg in Newgate; but it turned out that the good woman did so to all the criminals there whose warrants of execution she signed. Harley was still, however, so much distrusted, that both Godolphin and Marlborough declared that they would throw up their appointments if he and his colleague, St. John, were not dismissed.

The Queen again had to yield after many fierce disputes, unrestrained by her presence, and Robert Walpole for the first time entered the Cabinet. Sunderland fretted her with proposals to invite the Electress Sophia and her son to England, which was what the Queen especially dreaded.

Catherine of Braganza died in Portugal in 1706, and the Duchess of Marlborough insisted on having the gardens belonging to St. James's Palace, which had been her property, made over to serve for the site of a London house—the present Marlborough House—again the abode of royalty. To her buildings she sacrificed an oak sprung from an acorn of the royal oak at Boscobel, planted by Charles II., and great was the indignation, which found vent in bitter epigrams, although the oak leaf was then held as such a Jacobite symbol that zealous Whig magistrates put people in the stocks for wearing it on the 29th of May. It is possible that it may be the survival of some older custom, for in Wessex the day is called Shik-shak, and the oak-apple is worn by many ignorant of Charles's history. To the poor Queen this was a very sad time. Her husband was in a most suffering state, her ministers tormented her by their wrangling and denunciation of her friends, and the temper of the Duchess of Marlborough became more and more intolerable, between her suspicions of Mrs. Masham and her arrogance at the victories of her husband—victories whose bloodshed filled the Queen with sorrow for her soldiers.

In the summer of 1708 she took the Prince to Bath, where she was met by a procession of two hundred young ladies in the costume of Amazons, preceding the mayor and corporation. Prince George improved there, but very soon fell back again, and was soon known to be in a dying state. He was actually at the point of death when the Duchess of Marlborough insisted on speaking with the Queen, and had to be told to 'Withdraw' in so peremptory a tone that even she could not resist, though she did not leave the room; and from a distance watched the Prince die, on the 28th of October, 1708.

Anne was in an agony of distress, and the jealousy of the Duchess, who actually would not let her have Mrs. Masham's attendance in the first hour of her widowhood, must have added to her desolation. George of Denmark was indeed a proverb for dulness, but he had been truly loved by his wife, and after his death her comfort seems to have been in reading and praying in the little closet where he had been wont to amuse himself with carpentry.

She was utterly lonely and forlorn, with a ministry whose rude language was unrestrained by her presence, and whose treatment of the Church hurt her conscience; the bloodshed of her armies grieved her spirit, and the friend of her youth had become her worst tyrant. She felt the retribution, and mourned over those days when she had disowned her brother and forsaken her father. Then no doubt came the thoughts, as Mr. Palgrave has expressed them:

'Oft in midnight visions,
  Ghostly by my bed,
Stands a father's image,
  Grey, discrownèd head.

I forsook thee, Father;
  Was no child to thee;
Child-forsaken Mother!
  Now 'tis so with me.

Oft I see the brother—
  Baby born to woe—
Crouching by the Church wall
  From the blood-hound foe.

Evil crown'd of evil,
  Heritage of strife;
Mine an heirless sceptre,
  His an exile life.'

Yet, while the widowed, childless Queen pined in St. James's, the world went its way.

These were times of the greatest formality, the fashion set by the Spanish queens of France having pervaded every Court. Even when she rose in the morning, in France, the chemise had to be handed to the lady highest in rank to be given to her Majesty, who, if several came in in succession, had to stand shivering all the time. It was the same with the King, though Louis XIV. does seem to have put on his wig himself, it being handed on the end of a stick between his curtains before he emerged.

The ceremonies at Queen Anne's toilet were not quite so elaborate, but were tedious enough. When she had said her prayers, the bed-chamber woman handed the lady of the bed-chamber her body linen to put it over her, and, after her first garments were fastened, the page of the back stairs brought a ewer and basin, and placed it on a side table, whence the bed-chamber woman brought it and poured out the water, kneeling while the Queen performed her ablutions. She finished dressing the Queen, pulling on her gloves for her when the poor Queen's gouty hands were incapable. On one occasion the insolent Duchess Sarah made a gesture of disgust on touching Anne's gloves, and this was one of the broken links in their friendship.

The royal shoes were put on by the page of the back stairs, and he also had to hand her wine-glass to the bed-chamber woman, and she to the lady-in-waiting. Her cup of chocolate might be given without kneeling by her woman.

Indeed, such formalities prevailed in their degree through all ranks. The proud Duke of Somerset, as he was called, required all his daughters to stand in his presence till expressly permitted to sit down, and told one of them that she had broken his heart by her undutifulness when she ventured to sit down while he was asleep.

Formality was the refuge from coarseness. The gentlemen who haunted London were either swaggering ruffians, a terror to all, or else they were effeminate beaux, who received their visitors in bed, rose at twelve, rouged their cheeks, put on patches, and adorned themselves till three, when they repaired to the coffee-house, and there loitered till it was time to pay their devoirs to the fashionable ladies in the boxes at the theatre. It was not good tone to attend to the play; not because it was apt to be unfit for modest folks to watch, but out of mere frivolous arrogance. Visits to the Park and to different houses followed, and much gambling at ombre and piquet. The taste in dress accorded with the manners: the wig was at its largest development, and the ladies were beginning to verge towards the huge hoops and towering head-dresses worn in the ensuing reign.

Ignorance was fashionable, as it had been ever since the Revolution; but though many of the aristocracy were frivolous, there was an undercurrent of great brilliancy, causing Anne's to be called the Augustan Age.

Swift has been already mentioned. He was still writing his cleverest, bitterest, and, alas! coarsest of satires; but a better work was done by Joseph Addison and Sir Richard Steel, first in the 'Tatler,' then in the 'Spectator;' works that, coming out twice a week, did their utmost to raise the tone alike of taste, manners, and principle. The country portraits—above all of the good old knight, Sir Roger de Coverley, and of the idle, aimless younger brother, Will Wimble—have become proverbial. Letters were written in the paper criticising popular follies, and there were likewise able criticisms, which first led to appreciation of 'Paradise Lost,' and of the old ballad of 'Chevy Chase.' There, the strange little crooked Roman Catholic poet, Alexander Pope, published his 'Messiah,' a grand paraphrase of Isaiah's prophecies in the style of an Eclogue of Virgil. Other writers there were of a lesser order, who had their place of meeting at the coffee-houses, Wills's and White's especially, and were leavening the multitude. They had, however, for the most part to be dependent on the patronage of the wealthy; and though individuals like Lord Halifax, Mr. St. John, and others, were intellectual and appreciative, on the whole authors were treated as on the same level with other professional persons, doctors, lawyers, and even clergy, and as by no means on an equality with the gentry.

LECTURES ON CHURCH HISTORY GIVEN AT WINCHESTER.

BY THE EDITOR.

SECOND SERIES.

II.

It is on the Anglo-Saxon Church that we have now to begin in earnest. As we all know, the Saxons, as we are wont to term them, were one swarm of the great Teutonic race who had been steadily flowing into Europe from the East ever since the beginning of the Christian era.

Those Teutons who seized Italy, Spain, and Southern Gaul, had already been Christianised, though only as Arians, and they held Rome in awful respect, as the centre of mysterious power, and of knowledge far beyond them; and thus it was not difficult for the Church to maintain her framework throughout their incursions.

But Britain being more remote, the Roman organization, either of Church or State, had never been so complete, nor had Latin civilization so assimilated the subject Celtic population as in these other lands. Moreover, the conquerors came from the North, where Roman influence was unfelt, and were still absolute heathens.

How far their mythology had taken shape we do not know. Our first acquaintance with it in a consistent form comes from Iceland four or five centuries later, and it may then have been modified by Christian ideas. Yet there is every reason to think that the same myths went through the whole Teutonic race. Names of persons and places are compounded of the same prefixes and suffixes from the North Cape to Gibraltar, and testify to the same tales being current in each division of the great people which spread over Europe, subduing the Romans, and driving the Celts before them to the granite bounds of the Atlantic.

The three great Asa gods, Odin, Thor, and Frey—Wisdom, War, Love—were certainly universal, though the devotion to each was probably in different degrees in the various nations. Norse and Icelandic poems introduce us to Asgard, a complete system, as regular as that of the Greek Olympus, and with heroic myths that can bear a comparison with classic ones. The like were probably sung to our forefathers in these remote times, for the names are closely entwined in our language. The very name of God comes from their religion.

Not only have we still Wodensday, Thorsday, and Freiday, but we still call Thunder by the Saxon name of Thor; and Hela, the covered one, the pale daughter of the enemy of the Asa gods of light and summer, the ruler of the unhonoured dead, gave name even when our Bible was translated, alike to the abode of the disembodied spirit and the place of punishment. Freedom and Friendship are alike connected with Frey, the god of peace, and probably Frigga, goddess of love, the wife of Odin, was a later development from him. Many of our Lady flowers were originally hers, and are so still in the North; and the glittering gossamer, the goddess' cymar, was once the veil shed on her path after her flight over the dews at night.

The endurance of these words proves how the ideas connected with them must have been wrought into the very being of the race. There was much that was ferocious in their faith, but at the same time the ideal was a high-minded and generous one, placing courage and honour above all things, and making glorious a death on the battlefield, when chosen by the Valkyr—the battle-maids, or choosers of the slain, who marked, the night before, those who were to be transported to Odin's dwelling in Valhalla, there to spend their future in 'the warrior's joy, the hunter's mirth.'

Such were the broad outlines; the details probably varied with different divisions of the race.

As we all know, the conquest began by the arrival of the Jutes in Kent, and the immigration of Saxons first, then of Angles, occupied about a century. Bloody battles were fought at each step, and the new-comers were savages enough to obliterate all that they could of the civilization and religion of the vanquished, the Welsh, or strangers, as they termed them. The lower classes were enslaved, the higher rallied again and again as they were driven farther west; and the bitterest hatred sprang up between the two races.

By about 570 the eastern side of South Britain had been settled by Jutes, Saxons, and Angles, and almost entirely heathenized. In the north, however, Columba and his monks were converting those new settlers, the Scots; Kentigern influenced the Christian kingdom of Strath-Clyde.

Cambria itself, or rather the remnant of Britain, extended over Somerset, and thus included Avalon, the sacred vale of St. Joseph of Arimathea; but according to the earliest writer, Gildas, who was evidently contemporary, this British remnant was in a miserable state of tyranny and wickedness. He writes a sort of brief history of Britain, in turgid Latin, as a preface to an epistle to his countrymen, denouncing their deplorable corruption, which he considers to have well merited the ruin that had come upon them; nor does Arthur fare a bit better at his hands than the other tyrants, whom he reproaches with every kind of vice. The clergy, even when not openly wicked, were, according to him, neglectful and secular; and there was probably much truth in his charges. Isolation from the centre of civilization and public opinion—to say nothing of perpetual warfare—is apt to lead to sluggishness of mind and indifference of conscience.

Yet either Gildas was too universally severe, or else his objurgations had their effect, for the Church in Cambria was certainly alive and active, though only among its own people, in the sixth century—and numbered some distinguished saints.

Cadoc was one of these. He was the son of a petty king in South Wales, and was bred up by an Irish hermit, from whose care he passed to Lismore, one of the great monastic schools of Ireland. Thence returning, he founded the similar monastery of Llancarven, near Glamorgan, assisted by a body of Irish who had come over with him.

They cleared the forest and reclaimed the waste around, and likewise studied and prayed, and educated not only young priests and monks, but sons of chieftains. It seems to have been for their benefit that Cadoc drew up a set of admirable maxims, such as, 'Remember that thou art a man, and that there is nothing like a man who is king over himself.'

One of his disciples asked him to define the love of God. He said—

'Love, it is Heaven.'

And hate?

'Hate is Hell.'

And conscience?

'It is the eye of God in the soul of man.'

He had renounced the succession to his father's inheritance; nevertheless, it seems to have come to him, probably by failure of his brothers, for he was a chief of great power. When a robber prince tried to maraud on his cattle, his steward said, 'Our master is a man of great honour and dignity. He has a family of three hundred men maintained at his cost—a hundred priests, a hundred horsemen, a hundred workmen, without counting women and children.'

He made one expedition to Brittany, and here it is said the Bishops of London and York took refuge, settling on one of the little islets in the Bay of Morbihan, where he built a bridge across the strait for his scholars. Afterwards he returned to his own country, to endeavour to support the faith of the poor Britons, overwhelmed by the savage invaders, and he finally was martyred by the Saxons, in the church of Weedon in Northamptonshire.

Monasteries like his were known as Bangor, or the high choir, and several existed besides that of the town still bearing the name. Another Welsh saint was Dewi, or David, the founder of a monastery school perched on a peninsula stretching like an eagle's beak far into the Irish Sea, in the district of old Menevia. Teilo, the first Bishop of Llandaff, was his nephew. Indeed, the Welsh saints seem to have been in general related to one another, and mostly of royal blood, as, indeed, all the chieftains of tribes seem to have been esteemed kings.

Some of the sayings handed down in Triads are very beautiful, such as a saying attributed to Lazarus—

Believe in God who made thee.
Love God who redeemed thee.
Fear God who will judge thee.

Again later—

Three things that make a man equal to an angel—

The love of all good.
The love of charity.
The love of pleasing God.

The three primary qualities of goodness—

To speak the truth in spite of everything.
To love all good.
To suffer bravely for good.

The three likenesses of man to a devil—

Frightening a child.
Obstructing the way.
Laughing at mischief.

Three sorts of men—

A man of God who renders good for evil.
A man of man who renders good for good and evil for evil.
A man of the devil, who renders evil for good.

Taliessin, the great Bard, was a pupil of St. Cadoc, and so was Gildas the historian. There are many very legendary Welsh saints among them, St. Winifred as her name became on English lips, though it seems to have been really one of the forms of Guenever, Geneviève, or Ginevra, one of the names derived from Gwen, white. The legend was that she was pursued by Caradoc, one of the princes, on her way to a monastery; and that in his rage at her flight, he cut off her head with his sword, and rolling down the hill, it produced the famous St. Winifred's well, a really healing intermittent spring, in great repute throughout the Middle Ages.

St. Ceneh or Keyne, was another of these legendary maidens, from whom Keynsham in Somersetshire, takes its name. She was said to have turned all the snakes in that neighbourhood into stones, and moreover, when finishing her career in Cornwall, to have blessed the well called by her name, planted the four trees, withy, oak, elm, and ash, by her sacred well, and laid on it the curious blessing, known to us all in Southey's verse. Her view was peace-making, and that peace was best secured by the mastery being decided.

Cornwall and Devon, otherwise West Wales, had been converted by Irish missionaries, and they have a grand roll of saints, who placed churches and cells in all the coigns of vantage. Whenever modern care finds a mission chapel needed, there is almost certain to be a ruin, or a tradition of one of those of ancient times.

Thus Perran or Pieran, who came from Ireland, having been consecrated by St. Patrick, has left his name to three churches.

Perran Avonthall—on the noted river.

Perran Uthno—the Little.

Perran in Sabulo, or Perranzabulo, in the sand—and in the sand it certainly is, for it has had three times to be renewed, the old church being each time choked by drifting sands. St. Perran is credited by popular tradition with having discovered tin, which of course he did not, but his day, the second Thursday before Christmas, is still the tinner's holiday.

These Cornish churches followed the Welsh customs, and the Celtic churches were in close connection.

St. Kentigern or Mungo, whom we have already known at Glasgow, was involved in the misfortunes of the King of Strathclyde, Rhydderch Hael, who was expelled for a time by a usurper. The saint took refuge with St. David, and went out from him to found another monastery. This was at the confluence of the rivers Clwyd and Elwy, on a platform as it were of tableland, where like bees to a hive, as Welsh tradition reports, nine hundred and sixty-five brethren gathered round him, of whom three hundred illiterate ones worked in the fields and tended cattle, three hundred prepared food and attended to other household cares, and the other three hundred and sixty-five divided their time between study, and keeping up continual worship in their Church. One of these scholars was Asa, or Asaph, who, when Kentigern was able to return to Strathclyde, was appointed abbot and bishop, and finally left his name to the diocese.

These Welsh or Britons of Cornwall, Cambria, and Cumbria, do not seem to have felt any call to do anything save fight with the English invaders! and in truth there was little chance that they would have heeded, had they attempted such conversions.

They had no imposing remnants of Roman majesty, wherewith to impress the minds of the savages; their religion would seem to the mighty and courageous barbarians the faith of cowards and slaves, and their homely dresses, tonsured heads, small stature, and absence of weapons were despicable in the eyes of the huge-limbed, fair-skinned, flaxen-haired savages. It needed men from elsewhere, against whom no prejudice existed, to obtain their attention.

The Franks had been heathen, when in the beginning of the fifth century they overran Northern Gaul, under their long-haired kings, but through the influence of his Burgundian wife, Clotilda, and of St. Remi, Clovis had been Christianised and carried with him all his people. But their Christianity was of a low stamp; the Romano-Gallic clergy seem to have tolerated horrible violence and sensuality, or at any rate not to have used stringent measures such as would show that wickedness could not go along with the profession of Christianity.

When St. Columbanus, the greatest one of the foreign missionaries of Ireland, rebuked the young kings of the Eastern Franks for their evil and vicious lives, and made reformation a condition of their receiving the Holy Communion, great was the anger of their grandmother, Queen Brunehault, at such presumption. She forcibly expelled him from her dominions, and indeed, Bishop Desiderius of Vienne, was actually put to death for venturing on such a rebuke. He seems to have been an exception, but it is remarkable throughout French history, that toleration of moral guilt for the sake of outward adherence to the Church, has been the too frequent habit of the clergy, and the bane of the people.

The granddaughter of Clovis, Bertha, daughter to Charibert, King of Paris, was sought in marriage by Ethelbert, Jutish King of Kent, and Bretwalda, Britain wielder, exercising a sort of chieftainship over the east, south, and western Saxons, and perhaps over the Angle north and south folk, of bear land and deer land in the north, and the March or border kingdom in the centre.

The Frankish kingly ladies, if rude and savage, were very orthodox. Almost at this time, Ingund, another of the family, was instrumental by her life and death in bringing the Spanish Goths from Arianism to Catholicity, and it was stipulated that Bertha should be allowed the free practice of her religion. The retired Bishop of Senlis, or as some say of Soissons, Liudhard, came with Bertha as her chaplain, and was granted the use of the little old St. Martin's Church on a hill outside Canterbury, in the wall of which the unmistakable evidence of Roman bricks and Roman building attest its antiquity.

There Bertha worshipped, but for twenty years no apparent effort was made to obtain conversions. A letter, perhaps written by Liudhard, applied to the Gallican Bishops for missionaries to the English, but obtained no response.

THE TIME BEFORE LAST AT OBER-AMMERGAU.

Whatever may be the result of this year's performance at Ober-Ammergau, whether scepticism, or love of gain, or love of display are found to have invaded the little village lying amid its quiet mountains; or whether, in spite of all, in spite of the death of the old pastor, it has kept its strong religious feeling, its simplicity, and its sense of a sacred mission, those who were present at the date which heads this remembrance will own to impressions which have as yet scarcely faded, and which the mention of the Passion Play at once recalls. Some things, it is certain, have gone for ever; roughnesses are smoothed away, with which at least as much picturesqueness as discomfort has departed. Now, the railroad takes you almost to the journey's end; then, it left you at Weilheim, twenty-seven miles away from Ober-Ammergau, and the sights and experiences of the road made a fitting prelude to what was coming, it had all the charm of a mountainous region. Advancing, a range of hills, blue and very varied in form, rose before us, and the fir-trees on either side were set in turf like an English park, turf which in September was sheeted with lilac crocuses. The first halt was at Murnau, a striking little village, and then soon came the tug of the day, up the steep Ettal, a grand gorge flanked by frowning peaks, and edged by a foaming torrent. On its height stands the old monastery, monastery no longer, and, this point reached, Ober-Ammergau is not more than three miles distant. In the clear evening light, everything stood out distinctly, it is a land of mountain ash—the tree is chosen for that on which Judas hanged himself—and, on this year, 1871, they were laden with berries. Great dwarf thistles starred the grass, and through the pleasant pasture land ran a clear river, the Ammer; presently on the left side is seen a very distinctive feature of the place, a lofty oddly-shaped and precipitous rock—the Koffel—on which pious hands have erected a giant cross, with on either side a fir-tree.

And now, in a very little while, come into sight the church with its bulb-shaped tower, and, bordering the road, the pretty well-to-do houses, each white as plaster can make it, with deep shady eaves, and its own little garden. Nearly every house is surmounted by a cross, and a large number of the buildings are gaily decorated with frescoes of religious subjects. Directly through the village runs a branch of the Ammer, clear as crystal, and overstepped by innumerable small bridges. The Langs' house is in the centre of the village, they had secured a room for us at the Zwinks, kind hospitable wood-carvers, almost all of whom, down to the little Ludwig of six, take a part in the Play. There are indeed but a thousand inhabitants, and of these more than half are acting, or at any rate are in the great picture scenes, which will swallow up five hundred persons at once. As you walk about the village, you look curiously from face to face, wondering which actor is before you; but there is nothing in the appearance of the men, coming quietly in from their work in the fields or the carving-sheds, to distinguish them. A few have long hair; all are simple and free from the smallest approach to self-consciousness. They are full of their Play, it is true; it is said that the one to come fills their thoughts for five years beforehand, and the one that is past for five years afterwards. They are ready to make any sacrifice of time or labour, that so all may be as perfect as possible; but the motive which impels them is not—or was not at the time of which I write—gain or longing for fame; the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau is for its people a holy and solemn occasion, a true religious service, and to join in it is at once an honour and a consecration; most diligently is it studied, most carefully is each actor chosen for each part.

Throughout the next day, peasants from the country round were pouring into the village, men and women in Tyrolean dress, old women with quaint high head-dresses of gilt embroidery standing up behind, and pretty girls in curious short-waisted jackets, with great silver ornaments clasping their throats. As the afternoon drew on, the string of arrivals became continuous, people came in carts, in carriages, on foot; we met one party of ten or twelve pilgrim women, half of the number walking on either side of the dusty road, and as they walked they said their beads, and recited, antiphonally, a monotonous litany. At six in the evening guns were fired, a band paraded the village, the festival was begun, and quiet was at an end, for every house was invaded, beds were hastily made up wherever they could be placed, and all through the night there was coming and going, and the cry of the hours by the watchman. Our own bedroom—reached by a ladder—was about ten feet by seven, and just held two beds; the white-washed walls of spotless white were adorned with a couple of sacred pictures, and a stoup for holy water, while on each bed reposed a swollen *duvet*, and no other bed-clothes, and a window provided variable ventilation, for it was September, and the nights were both cold and damp.

However, that was not the night for sleep. Long, long before dawn mass began to be said hourly, and there would be found all the actors and most of the peasants. By five o'clock guns were banging, and all the remaining sleepers were astir, and at seven the road to the poplar-bordered theatre—lying just out of the village, in level meadows—was thronged with its many-coloured thousands.

We had left the choice of seats to the Langs, and nothing could have been better than those we found reserved for us under the simple pent-house roof which sheltered the principal places. All the arrangements were orderly and quiet, the great audience—a motley multitude, from an Emperor downwards—took their seats without the slightest confusion, three guns announced eight o'clock, and as the last echo died away, from either side of the stage filed in the seventeen striking figures of the chorus, nine men and eight women, all dressed alike in white tunics trimmed with gold fringe over coloured skirts of scarlet, blue, or rose, while long cloaks of one or other of these colours hung from their shoulders, and all had gold circlets on their heads. The leader in the centre was a magnificent figure, his dress entirely of white and gold with scarlet cloak, and his beard marking him out from the others. Their actions were full of grace, and the movements of their hands peculiarly well-balanced. Intoning and singing to wild and original music the first call to the human race—

> 'Wirf zum heiligen Staunen dich nieder,
> Von Gottes Fluch gebeugtes Geschlecht!'

the group opens and falls back on either side for the first picture-scene of Adam and Eve driven from the Garden. Always, while a tableau is represented, the chorus sing and explain the connection of the type with that portion of our Saviour's Passion which it prefigures; but when any scene of His suffering is actually enacted, they leave the stage altogether. The tableau, of course, requires to be grouped in a covered and curtained central part of the stage, but all the rest of the large space is open to the skies, and this it may be said at once is one of the conditions which alone make the Passion Play of Ober-Ammergau possible. In a building which in any way recalled an ordinary theatre it would be unendurable; but here you have the mountains for a background, you look across the meadows to little Unter-Ammergau lying whitely; while the sun, which flashes upon and lights up this or that point, the shadows which fling their gloom, the wind which lifts the hair and garments—I shut my eyes and see St. Peter and St. John walking alone and meeting this disturbing wind—the butterflies which flutter gaily across the stage, the birds which cry, and dart, and circle above it, all these natural things give an indescribable air of reality to the whole.

I do not think that from beginning to end there is anything more impressive or overpowering than the first scene which is presented—the triumphal Entry. It may be because here, suddenly, is put into form that which neither painting or sculpture can embody, because it seems like the fulfilling of all imagination; but I do not think that many out of the six thousand could look unmoved at the procession which, heralded by joyful shouts, winds into sight. Palm branches are waved, garments spread, and in the midst of the crowd, numbering two or three hundred, there rides upon the patient ass that marvellous figure upon whom all eyes are fixed.

No one, I suppose, who had thought at all, had come to Ammergau for the first time without some—in few cases without much—doubt. Was it possible that it should not jar—should not, at some points at least, be repugnant to man's deepest feelings? I should say, that from the moment of this Entry the doubt vanished. I recollect, at the end of all, suddenly remembering with wonder that it had existed. Joseph Maier, the Christus of 1870–71 and 1880, was, at the first date, twenty-seven years of age, and a wood-carver by trade, tall, and dark, not what would be called handsome, but with a wonderful earnest beauty in his face, and a dignity and simplicity in every movement, which gives his impersonation a feeling of truth such as no painting has ever reached.

'Heil Dir! Heil Dir! o Davids Sohn!'

And now as the Christ comes forward on foot, surrounded by disciples, rejoicing people and little children, we see an angry group of high priests and Pharisees advance from the other side, and then with actions of splendid majesty he cleanses the Temple, overthrows the money-changers' tables, 'and the seats of them that sold doves,' the released birds flying away into the air, and the angry priests trying to draw the people to their side. This is the point which is chosen at Ammergau to give, as Försch says, 'the dramatic principle running through the succeeding acts; the adoration of the people, the belief in His teachings, the victory of His spirit over the scribes adhering to the dead forms, the power of His holy zeal in the purification of the Temple, and the alliance between the priests and the gold-loving merchants of the Temple to bring about His destruction.'

When we can look away from that grand central figure dressed in crimson over an under robe of reddish-purple, we begin to make out the well-known characteristics of the chief Apostles. The young St. John, scarcely more than a boy, and wearing a dress of red over green, has a beautiful face; there is St. Peter, admirable in conception, and there, there is Gregor Lechner, in yellow dress over red, who so magnificently developes the character of Judas.

Christ and his disciples go back to Bethany, and the song of the chorus, and the tableau of Joseph's brethren plotting against him, lead up to the Council of the Sanhedrim. The tableaux are all types. They vary of course in interest, but some of the groups are never to be forgotten, and they are in almost every case remarkable for an extraordinary richness and harmony of colour, for variety, for faithfulness of representation, and for the astonishing speed with which they are grouped and changed. As has been said, some of the most elaborate of these living pictures—such as the rain of manna, the lifting of the brazen serpent, the bringing of the grapes—require more than five hundred men, women, and little children, down to three years old, for their representation, and that such an immense number should be artistically grouped, and remain absolutely still for the required time, without the smallest hitch, can scarcely be believed by those who have not seen for themselves. But beautiful as these are, some of the simpler groups are yet more impressive, notably Tobias taking leave of his home, and Adam and Eve after the expulsion. The attitude of Adam—digging, but pausing in his toil to wipe the sweat from his brow—is extremely fine; admirable, too, is the grouping of the seven children, some playing with a lamb, others dragging away roots of thorns.

'Dieses ist die Frucht der Sünde,'

sings the chorus. Nothing, again, could well be more perfect than the pictured type of Joab's treacherous kiss to Amasa, or than two or three of those in which Joseph and his brethren figure, one especially of Joseph at the height of his Egyptian glory, and probably never before Ober-Ammergau has the lesson of the types been brought so clearly before the mind.

It is at Bethany, in his indignation at the costly offering of the Magdalene, that the character of Judas begins to unfold; the idea seized upon and magnificently worked out by Lechner, being that while his avarice tempts him to enrich himself, he always believes that his Lord will save Himself by miraculous means, and his horror, when he finds that He will use no such means of escape—expressed in a most powerful monologue—drives him to self-destruction.

'Ah, my dear Master,
He, best of all men living, have I sold,
Delivered up to treatment harsh and vile,
To martyrdom excruciating.'

The words of Christ, after the scene at Bethany, in which he parts from his mother, who in vain dissuades him from re-entering Jerusalem, were strictly confined to those of the Bible. The Blessed Virgin was never made a prominent figure, she had a sweet face, but no change of expression, and she looked too young. Throughout the Passion Play the acting of the women was decidedly inferior to that of the men. Caiaphas, as represented by Johann Lang, was admirable, and so indeed were the actions, grouping, and colouring of the whole body of the Sanhedrim, where the white-haired Annas appeared in equal authority with his son-in-law.

Four hours had passed, four hours of almost breathless looking and listening, and then came the break needed by all before the most solemn part, the close of the Passion began; a break which lasted half an hour, and during which the theatre was completely emptied. From the time when it filled again, for the remaining hours, the absorbing interest never flagged. The types of Micaiah, of Naboth, of Job, of Cain, Daniel, Joseph, Isaac, and the scapegoat, were all remarkable; but it was the central figure which riveted the eyes and hearts of the watchers. Two especial points in the solemn story were brought home with extraordinary vividness, the stirring up of the people of Jerusalem by the priests, and the weariness of the Saviour's sufferings, dragged from the Sanhedrim to Pilate, from Pilate to Herod, from Herod to Pilate again, patient and silent throughout, and never, in the moment of deepest humiliation, losing his divine dignity. Those who have seen it shadowed forth at Ammergau will, I think, be ready to agree that it is scarcely possible to conceive its failing to bring home to the heart of every one present a fuller understanding of our Blessed Lord's awful suffering, and, with this, of His ineffable Love and Patience.

The realism of the Crucifixion was tremendous, yet, even here, nothing jars; the holy reverence, the absence of all appearance of acting—it is here that the great power of the Passion Spiel lies, it is through this that you learn that it is in truth a religious act, a Liturgy, coming from the very souls of the people. You are never pained with a single movement of self-consciousness.

Pilate appears only in the balcony of his house; from thence he addressed the crowd below, in its gorgeous Eastern colouring, and there the Christ is brought to be shown to the people as 'the Man.' When, later on, Calvary is to be approached, you see first, in the street to the left, the advancing group of the Blessed Virgin with St. John and the holy women, all showing signs of deep grief; then, from the right, slowly winds the long procession, Christ staggering beneath the Cross, the mounted centurion, the Roman standard, the four executioners, the soldiers in their splendid dresses, and the exultant Pharisees. Down the centre of the stage, meanwhile, comes, from the country, the unconscious Simon of Cyrene, and, turning a corner, the vast crowd bars his way; the soldiers seize him, and, in spite of his protestations, he is forced to bear the Cross. Here, too, the one non-Biblical incident takes place; St. Veronica meets the Christ, and, weeping, offers her handkerchief, but no attempt is made to show the reputed miracle.

So they pass out of sight; and now, in this still and awful moment, the chorus comes on the stage, all the bright garments shrouded in black, and with mournful gestures, and to the accompaniment of minor music, now and then broken upon by the sound of hammers, the choir leader tells what is happening—

> 'Have you no tears to shed for Him?'

and the curtain of the central and covered part lifts as the crosses of the thieves are being placed in position. But the Cross of Christ is still on the ground; in a minute that, too, is raised, and the effect is overpowering—tears stream from the eyes of strong men, scarcely any one remains unmoved. All the Seven words follow—the Death—and the piercing of the side, after which the Roman guards leave the place. Nicodemus and Joseph, having obtained their request, the chief priests are informed by a terrified boy-messenger of the rending of the veil, and retire, still, by violent words and gestures, marking their hatred of the motionless Figure, and their rage against Nicodemus. Then, after twenty minutes of hanging upon the cross—which represents a most exhausting effort for even the strongest man—the Christ is taken down, every detail being carried out with an exactitude, realism, and reverence which is simply amazing.

The strife is over, the Resurrection is at hand. Jonah, and the escape of the children of Israel through the Red Sea, are chosen to pre-figure it; and the chorus come back in their beautiful robes once more, and sing with passionate joyfulness. Soon we see the Roman guard; there is the earthquake, the falling of the stone, the appearance of the risen Christ in shining raiment. He passes swiftly from sight, leaving the keepers half dead. The Pharisees hurrying to the spot, and hearing from the soldiers what had happened, persuade them with bribes, though one protests that he shall always tell what actually happened. Christ appears to the Magdalen. The final Ascension is treated partly as a tableau, for all the group is motionless except the central Figure, which slowly and majestically ascends, while a burst of hallelujah breaks from the chorus.

What an immense mass of people was that in which we found ourselves wedged outside the theatre, yet how quiet and orderly! Orderly though it was, however, after the intense strain of those last hours, it was a great relief to break away from the crowd and to find oneself alone where one could think over the marvellous story of Divine Love which the people of Ammergau have done their best to set forth—evidently. The sun soon sank behind the mountains, but a golden glow lingered in the sky, purple mists marked the shadows, and the delicate lilac crocuses robbed the meadows of their usual greenness. A solemn hush seemed to have fallen upon this village of wood-carvers, and inside his simple home, Joseph Maier, with the awe of the day upon his face, was gravely turning over some of his own handiwork for the friends who had come to ask for it.

THE FOLK-LORE OF PASSIONTIDE.

WILL those who read the above title think that I am handling a sacred subject too lightly? Our forefathers deemed it no irreverence to weave their legends which associate bird, beast, herb, and tree, with the greatest sacrifice and the greatest triumph the world has ever seen. Not only did the Passion of our Lord influence nature, but it left its stamp upon all nature; so that we, looking around us upon the beautiful world in which we live, may see everywhere traces to remind us of the sorrows and glories of the first Good Friday.

That Passion and Triumph began when the whole city was astir—every one demanding who it was coming riding through the street upon the 'colt, the foal of an ass.' And to this day the dark stripes on a donkey's back are displayed as the marks where the Redeemer's form pressed it. At that time the people cut down branches of the trees to strew in the way; palms and willows, 'Hosannas,' so called from the cry of triumph which accompanied them at the Feast of Tabernacles: 'the bundles of willows of the brook they carry at the Feast of Tabernacles are called Hosannas' (*Elias Levita*). In England now, particularly in the west, 'Palm' is the name universally given to the willow flowers—the downy, sweet, yellow tufts that adorn the edge of every brook in spring time. Either the name has sprung from some interchange of epithets with the real palm, or else the explanation may lie in the circumstance—

> 'In Rome upon Palm Sunday they bear true palms,
> The Cardinals bow reverently and sing old psalms:
> Elsewhere those psalms are sung 'mid olive branches,
> The Holly bough supplies the place among the avalanches;
> More northern climes must be content with the sad willow.'

Only too soon is the joy of that glad entry changed for the silence of sad Gethsemane. As our Lord passed down the garden, every flower bent its head in silent sympathy with His sufferings. All but one; the Crown Imperial held up her lily-white cups—for in those days they were white and erect—refusing either sympathy or adoration. But not for long; soon sorrow and shame conquered pride, she blushed, drooped her head, and at the foot of each petal rose a tear. To this day we may see them—great tear-drops hanging inside her bending cups.

Already an ominous knowledge of the forthcoming sacrifice had been imparted to the forest trees. They took counsel, and vowed a solemn vow that not one of them should consent to make the Cross. The Holm Oak alone refused the oath, and of its wood the Cross was made, for which it has been ever accursed. Or it was of the mistletoe (as the Devonshire peasant will say), until that time a noble forest tree, since then withered into a miserable parasite. In other parts of England the faggots are carefully searched, to be sure that there is no elder in them, for the Cross, they say, was formed from elderwood, and it is unlucky to burn it. In Lithuania there runs a legend that once our Lord was passing through a wood where all the trees bowed before Him, except the aspen. Stiff, rigid, and erect it stood, full of disdain; by-and-by, however, the wood of the haughty aspen made the Cross; and, shuddering then with horror, it has trembled ever since.

Yet, in spite of legendary lore, our hearts tell us that there can be no curse connected with the glorious symbol of our salvation. Rather would we remember that it has been said the carpenter's craft has twice saved the world—when the Ark was built, and when the Cross was made. Then comes to our minds the old legend of the Cross. It was of the Tree of Life, and none other, that it was formed. Noah had the first beams given him from Eden for the ark; Solomon, by Divine guidance, was shown where they lay hid, and built them into his temple; and once again, when there seemed a lack of wood, they were discovered at Jerusalem, and nailed together into the Cross of Christ; the very Tree of Life from which God reigned over the Gentiles. Not by mere chance, but by the foresight which has directed the universe, that wood was chosen.*

'Sola digna tu fuisti, ferre pretium sæculi,
Atque portum præparare nauta mundo naufrago,
Quem sacer cruor perunxit fusus agni corpore.'

The prophecy of Isaiah that 'the glory of Lebanon, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, shall beautify the place of My sanctuary,' has been interpreted as denoting the several woods of the Cross. A distich attributed to the venerable Bede tell us—

'Pes crucis est cedrus, corpus tenet alta cupressus,
Palma manus retinet, titulo laetatur oliva.'

'Nailed were His feet to cedar, to palm His hands,
Cypress His body bore, title on olive stands.'

Those who know Chester Cathedral will remember that the altar there is made of several woods brought from the Holy Land, notably the olive and the cedar of Lebanon; and, with this legend in mind, it seems particularly beautiful that the daily sacrifice should there be offered upon the very woods to which tradition has assigned the honour of once bearing the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

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* The 'Legend of the Cross' is far too long for more than a brief mention here: it has been published in a facsimile edition by Mr. Fisher Unwin.

The dwarf birch of Scotland, 'Good Friday rod,' the willow with branches that have drooped and wept ever since, share the dismal charge of having scourged their Maker; the bulrush was the sceptre of mockery placed in our Lord's hands.

Then, 'they plaited a crown of thorns'—a crown to which nearly every thorny plant that grows lays a claim. And, strange to say, where the Cross has brought a curse to the wood that formed it, the plant which was woven into the Crown of Thorns brings a blessing, and possesses many virtues. The word 'ακανθὸς, meaning merely a thorn, has been interpreted to signify the bear's-foot (*Acanthus mollis*) of our gardens, whose broad spiky leaves can hardly be termed thorny. Then there is the thorny acacia of Arabia; and the 'Christe-thorn' (*Paliurus aculeatus*), of which Gerarde tells us 'this shrubby thorn, paliurus, was the thorn wherewith they crowned our Saviour Christ, and the reason for the proof thereof is this, that in Judea there was not any thorn so common, so pliant, or so fit to make a crown or garland of, nor any so full of cruel sharp prickles.' 'Christ-dorn' in Germany is the holly, of which they say the Crown of Thorns was made. The most popular plant of tradition is the hawthorn, '*L'Epine Noble*' of France, on this very account. It was a mediæval belief, for Sir John Mandeville tells us that our Lord was let into a garden where 'the Jews maden hym a crowne of the Albiespyne, that is whitethorn, that grew in the same garden, and setten yt upon hys heved. And therefore hath the whitethorn many virtues; for he that beareth a branch on hym thereof no thunder ore no manner of tempest may dere hym, ne in the house that yt is in may non evil ghost enter.' Yet, remembering the pain they caused our Lord, the May-trees make bitter moan on Good Friday. The barberry, 'that hath so many virtues,' is another plant of the crown—with eglantine and bramble. The West Indian negroes say that the branches of the Cashew-tree were used, and for that reason the yellow flower petals to this day have a stain of blood upon them.

In another place Sir John Mandeville (who gives accounts of three thorny crowns) states that the Crown of Thorns was made of 'jonkes of the sea,' that is, rushes. At first sight, the statement appears incredible; but in the 'Plant lore of Shakespeare,' a footnote tell us that likely enough the old traveller was right. *Juncus aculeatus* pricks as sharply as thorns; and the Crown of Thorns preserved in Paris, where it was brought by St. Louis, is undoubtedly made of sharp-edged rushes.

No plant is too lowly for the impress of Christ's Passion. As He bent under His cross in the street, gentle Saint Veronica wiped His face with her handkerchief, and the mark of the Divine countenance was not only stamped there, but upon the tiny flower that bears her name, which we call 'speedwell,' because it bids good-speed to the weary traveller on his journey.

Christ hangs upon the Cross, the crown of thorns on His brow; but the influence over nature is not yet at an end. A little bird pecking at those cruel thorns, has with infinite trouble removed one, and its breast is stained with the Creator's blood. This is the robin, henceforth a sacred bird, protected by man. The crossbill, as the German legend tells us, was at the same time busied in trying to remove the nails from its Maker's hands.

'Stained with blood, and never tiring,
  With its beak it doth not cease;
From the Cross 'twould free the Saviour,
  Its Creator's Son release.

And the Saviour speaks in mildness,
  "Blest be thou of all the good,
Bear as token of this moment
  Marks of blood and holy rood."

And that bird is called the Crossbill,
  Covered all with blood so clear;
In the groves of pine it singeth
  Songs, like legends, strange to hear.'

That holy blood could not fall to the ground in vain. Where it fell, up sprang the arum, with deep unwrought marks upon its leaves; its portion of the atoning blood shed upon Calvary. The same tradition prevails with the spotted orchis. In the flax-fields of Flanders grows the Rood-selken, the red spots on whose leaves are the blood of Christ, which neither rain nor snow have been able to obliterate. In Palestine the red anemone, in England the dark wallflower, both bear the name of 'Blood-drops of Christ.' Finally, the vervain was there, notable since for so many virtues.

'Hallow'd be thou, Vervain, as thou growest on the ground,
For in the Mount of Calvary thou first was found;
Thou healest our Saviour Jesus Christ,
And staunchest His bleeding wound.'

Then followed our Lord's death; the awful darkness; and in the awe that fell over nature, the plants took counsel and agreed upon their signs of mourning.

'*The Pine of Damascus said:* From this day my foliage shall remain sombre, and I will dwell in solitary places.'

'*The Willow of Babylon*—My branches shall henceforth incline towards the waters of Euphrates and there shed the tears of the East.'

'*The Vine of Sorrento*—My grapes shall be black, and the wine that shall flow from my side shall be called *Lacryma Christi.*'

'*The Cypress of Carmel*—I will be the guest of the tombs, and the testimony of grief.'

'*The Yew*—I will be the guardian of graveyards. No bee shall pillage with impunity my poisoned flowers. No bird shall rest on my branches, for my exhalations shall give forth death.'

'*The Iris of Susa*—Henceforth I will wear perpetual mourning, in covering with a violet veil my golden chalice.'

'*The Day-Lily*—I will shut every evening my sweet-smelling corolla, and will only reopen it in the morning with the tears of the night.'

Centuries after the Crucifixion, when the New World was discovered, the Spaniards found that they were not the first there to bear record to the death and atonement of Christ. In a wild flower, henceforth to be known as the Passion-flower, were grouped together all the signs of the Crucifixion. In that blossom were visible the nails, sponge, spear, the pillar of scourging, the crown of thorns, the five wounds, and the cross itself. And kneeling down they thanked God, who in that new land had placed the tokens of the blessed death and passion of His Son. Those who first noted the signs in the Passion-flower; those in whose minds the many legends of Passiontide were cherished; shall we call them irreverent? They, like the Greeks of old, were feeling after God, and they found tokens to remind them of His goodness in every tree and flower. They questioned the reason for natural problems, and found a reply to their questions in things Divine and unseen.

Dare we, from the heights of (so-called) superior education, ridicule their beliefs? Better, far better, that we learnt from them to see God on every side; and permitted the legend of tree and flower to remind us of Christ's Atonement, and strengthen our faith.

BEATRIX F. CRESSWELL.

NOTE.—We may add that the *Arum Maculatum*, Lords and Ladies, has been called the English Passion-flower. One provincial name is Lamb in a pulpit, as in it are traced by some eyes, the Column, the Blood, and the Scourges.

Also in Palestine grows the Calvary Clover, *Medicago Uncinatus*, with red spots on its trefoil leaves; and a pod or capsule in a ball which, when opened with a pin, can be pulled out into a long twisted, thorny wreath. When the ends are fastened together it forms a beautiful miniature crown of thorns.

ED.

A GOOD FRIDAY PROCESSION AT GRASSINA.

ALTHOUGH I had often heard about the beauty and interest of the processions of *Gesù Morto,* I had never myself seen one; either because I had not had the forethought to ascertain at which village it would take place, or else because I had felt disinclined to risk witnessing it when surrounded by tourists who looked on it as merely a curious spectacle.

Last Lent, however, I inquired in time, and ascertained that there would be one at the quiet little village of Grassina, which lay away back in the hills of the Val d'Ema, and where only simple country folk would be found.

I sent Virgilio Cecchi—brother to the Ottavia, whose wonderful dream the readers of the 'Monthly Packet' may remember—to inquire how we could get to Grassina; and he found that on Good Friday there would be *diligences* running every half hour between four and six.

This Virgilio, a boy of fifteen, was the despair of his mother, being, as she constantly informed him, the very opposite to his sister. He was, like many young Italians of his class, full of contempt for priests, and their doings; horrifying his mother by recounting stories and jokes at their expense, refusing to confess, and even, sometimes, to attend mass.

'Indeed, Signorina,' the poor woman often exclaimed, 'the Lord knew what He was doing when He took my Ottavia! What would she have done if she had lived to hear how her brother talks now?'

I guessed, however, that the boy's talk was chiefly that of opposition, and advised Signora Cecchi not to bother him by constantly lamenting over his wickedness. He got his ideas at the sculptor's studio where he was working, and being extremely witty, and even more ignorant, he was at present unable to discern what was good and helpful in the symbolisms and ceremonies which struck him as absurd or useless. But I knew the boy to be good at heart, and always hoped that he would in time get to appreciate all the truths of his religion, even though he should never emulate his mother in her predilection for mass-hearing and rosary-repeating.

I thought, therefore, it would be well to take him to this procession with me; since, not 'being of the religion,' as they term it, he could not think that I had any interested motives.

A friend of mine, who had an intense appreciation of the beauty and pathos of many of the Catholic ceremonies, and two young girls staying with her, also wished to come, so we arranged to meet at the stables whence the *diligence* started at 4.30 on Good Friday afternoon.

The morning broke very gloomily, and at intervals tremendous rain-storms swept over the town, darkening the church, in harmony with the prayers and lessons of that day's service.

At 2 o'clock it cleared, but only temporarily, for at 4 it was raining worse than ever. I doubted my friends' courage holding good; but, Virgilio coming to fetch me, I started for the stables all the same. The rain-clouds were being blown rapidly across the sky by a strong south-west wind; but, as there were constant breaks in them, Virgilio opined that eventually the weather would be fine.

In the narrow little old Via dei Pepi—whence the *diligences* started —we met the three be-waterproofed figures of my friends, and, taking shelter in the coach-house, we began a vigorous discussion as to the advisability or non-advisability of risking the chance of the weather clearing up. To arrive at Grassina, in the pouring rain, to find the procession stopped by it, would not be amusing. The driver, indeed, assured us it was nothing but a shower, and the procession was safe to take place; but then he was too interested a person to be able to give a verdict that was entirely to be depended on. But still, supposing we didn't go, and it turned out a lovely evening, that would be worst of all! So we finally decided that, even if we did get a little wet, it would not hurt us; and the driver promising to bring us back immediately in case there were no procession, we told him to put in the horses and we would start.

The *diligence* was a neat little vehicle, quite new and clean, holding six people inside, and several on the box. Our driver said we should have it to ourselves for a trifling *pourboire*, so we arranged ourselves comfortably inside, and sent Virgilio on the box, where he held a marvellous green umbrella over himself and the driver.

As we drove over the bridge, we saw that the sky was clear behind the western hills, but the rain continued beating on the diligence curtains and the huge green umbrella till we had passed beyond the S. Niccolò Barriera, when the storm passed over before us, and the sun shone on the dripping grey walls, and the white and rose-tinted fruit blossoms rising from behind them, and cast the loveliest blue and purple shadows on the hills which stood out against the storm-washed sky beyond. The road at first was narrow, bounded by high grey walls, or irregular groups of houses; but later, as we climbed higher, we came to low hedges and open fields, dotted with vines or olive-trees, or, here and there, a solitary little cypress. Several *barrocci*, with their quick-trotting horses, and small seat crammed with four or even five men and boys, passed us, bound evidently for the same goal.

After a drive of about an hour and a half we reached a long, straggling, double row of houses, backed on the left by the small river l'Ema, on either side of which the hills sloped up to olive-planted *poderi*. Halfway up these fields, to the left, and on a sort of prominence, stood a small church; and Virgilio, turning round, informed us that we had arrived, as this was Grassina.

The village street was already full of country people, all, of course, in their bright-coloured holiday garments. They told us that there was a good hour and a half yet to wait before the procession would start, so we decided not to mind the mud, but to go for a walk round the place, and find the best point from which to view the procession. We crossed the little river by its quaint old wooden bridge, raised several steps higher than the banks, and climbed up a narrow pathway to the church. The little square in front of it was fairly dry, and the vendors of sweets and biscuits had already taken up their position there.

We mounted the steps and entered the centre doorway, from which the inevitable dark curtain had been drawn back; the church was in the deepest gloom, all the windows being draped with black, and there being no lights except the small lamp by the High Altar. It took some minutes before our eyes got accustomed to the darkness sufficiently to see even where to put our feet. We gradually distinguished kneeling figures here and there, who rose and passed before the High Altar, where, lying on a sort of bier, was a life-sized plaster figure of our Lord, the five wounds of which they (more or less) devoutly kissed. Others were standing in groups, talking, arranging about the candles and torches for the procession.

We did not stay there long, as we wanted to find out exactly what route the procession would take. We found that it would go up a path behind the church, leading past several old cottages on to the olive fields, and winding through them over the hill by a steep and rough path, would descend to the opposite end of the village, returning to the church by its street and the bridge we had already crossed. It was still far too early for it to start, they told us, as, until the sun had set, it was not right to begin. We wandered off, therefore, in search of flowers, noticing in every cottage window that we passed, rows of lamps or candles, whilst, in one rather superior farm-house, still more magnificent preparations for illumination were being made, in the shape of large Japanese lanterns suspended from beams all along the wall.

As it got near sundown, we saw lots of people making their way across the bridge and up the little path; and we ran down to join them. The small square was pretty full of people, but we got seats on the low wall which bordered it, beside a sweet-vendor, who kept pouring drops of red syrup or liqueur into odd little squares of some pasty substance hollowed in the middle into wells, and which were eagerly bought for a few *centimes* by youths and boys, and even men.

We invited Virgilio to treat himself, but he declined with thanks, apparently finding his position as our escort too dignified to allow of such frivolities. I asked him if he ought not to go into the church, thinking he might be shy of doing so, but he answered cheerfully that he had already been (he must have been extraordinarily quick), and had kissed the Christ and the Madonna. Finding him in so good a mood, I thought I would ask him about an evening school to which we had urged his mother to send him. It was an unfortunate subject I found, for he burst out—

'Imagine, Signorina, it is little old priests who teach there! If I'd known that, I'd never have gone—they are always driving at making one confess, and repeat Latin prayers, and we hardly learn anything. But the other evening'—and he laughed at the mere recollection—'you should have heard us. The *orario* (time-table) says ten minutes prayers at the beginning, and at the end, the rest for lessons; but they always kept us half an hour at prayers, and all in Latin, which they don't half understand themselves even—and so the other night when it was *festa*, and they gave us oranges and buns, but the prayers were longer than ever, we rebelled, and a regular row began, oranges were flung all about the place, and we cried, "Down with the priests!" I think most of us were laughing all the time, and the priests only called out, "Fine gratitude!" whilst we were just as good friends after. And they gave us quite as long prayers after,' he added humorously.

'Well, I can't say I congratulate you on your manners. You might have found a more polite way of rewarding them for their pains.'

'Oh, they are paid for it all. Every marriage, every baptism, and even the sacraments for the dying, have their fees. Yes, yes; even my mother has to allow that, Signorina.'

'To a certain extent it is so, I know. But remember how much they give away. And then the nuns and monks, they do a lot without any pay—those dear Dominican Sisters who teach in that Ghetto School for the poorest children day after day entirely from love and pity, and my good little Santa Zita nuns who keep so many orphans without any one paying for them; and who even gave me twenty francs the other day (out of some money collected for *them*), to help with a subscription for a wooden leg for a poor girl. I think, really, it is very stupid of you to fix your attention on whatever is bad in things, dear boy. You might at any rate give the good side its turn.'

Virgilio smiled good-humouredly, and answered—

'I wish you would tell my mother that about *me!* If she'd only let alone my bad side, she'd find I had a sort of a good one.' He paused a minute, then added, half shyly, 'I'll tell you what I did the other night, Signorina. You remember that young woman who died at our house last week (a lodger)? Well, after she was buried, her husband looked over her things, and he found the counter-sign—half a medallion—of a baby of hers in the Foundling Hospital, and the paper describing it. He was so angry that he tore up the paper, and threw it with the bit of the medallion, away in a corner, so that no one should ever be able to find the child. I thought that a real shame, for it wasn't the poor little fellow's fault, and often these foundlings aren't at all well treated, so I waited till he went out, then I got all the bits of paper and the medallion, and gummed the paper together, and as soon as I'm a sculptor and have a studio of my own, I shall go and get the boy out, and have him to work with me.'

He spoke with real enthusiasm, his eyes bright at the prospect of doing good in his own way, and we wished him all success in his career, and a good memory for his kindly intentions.

The sun had now sunk behind the hills; and a movement took place in the square. Several little fellows were being robed by their fathers or big brothers in white garments, either night-shirts of their own, or day-shirts of their father's, spotlessly white, and tied in round the waist by a tape. When dressed they went into the church, as did also women and girls, with veils on their heads, the elder ones dressed entirely in black, the younger in their *festa* attire.

'Don't you wish we could go in the procession, too, and carry candles?' said my friend.

'Yes, immensely; they look so much in earnest and so quiet, it would be really nice to follow with them.'

'But we haven't veils unfortunately, and I suppose it would be better not to look different in any way to them, it might make them pay more attention to us than to their prayers.' So we decided it couldn't be done that year anyhow.

The people by now were standing thick in the square, and in the church, whilst we saw the village bandsmen coming up the path. Thinking it would be nicer to see the procession in the quiet country, we left the square and climbed the path to the lantern-decorated farmhouse, taking up our places in a lane which branched off by it.

The Japanese lanterns were all being lighted; and we watched—seized with the silence of expectation—the other lights springing up in all the cottage windows on both sides of the valley, and the length of the village street. The wind, though warm and soft, blew strongly, and brought us at intervals the sound of chanting from the church below. Suddenly the bell rings out, and the band breaks into a slow march, and we see the torchlights come flickering round the corner of the church, and mount the slope towards us. The farm-people and their friends are all beside us; but we lose consciousness of them and of each other, as the sad and solemn music spreads over the silent country. Nearer and nearer they come, and we hear the chanting of men's fine voices mingling with the music of the band. And now they are alongside, and there passes—first, a weary-looking old man bearing a black wooden cross, torch-bearers beside him; next, a file of the little white-robed boys, each holding one of the sacred emblems of the Passion in both their hands, their eyes fixed gravely upon it.

After them came seven men, each carrying a sort of placard, on which are printed the seven last words; and then comes the centre of interest, and every one sinks on their knees as the Christ is borne past, surrounded by chanting priests, and women holding candles. The wind blows the lights hither and thither, casting strange shadows alike on the imitation figure of our Lord, and on the real figures who are bearing it, giving a look of reality to the former, and of vague unreality to the latter, which makes the whole thing seem at once actual and symbolical, of time and of eternity.

But more women and girls with candles pass us, carrying the Madonna, and afterwards the band, all going on into the darkness of the roadway between the olive-trees and hedges; a long line of figures fitfully illumined by the wind-blown torches and candles they bear.

The whole scene was intensely beautiful and pathetic; these quiet hills, with their dotted lights, stretching up to meet the sky, whose stars seemed purified and perfected reflections of our earth's feeble illuminations; that little procession receding farther and farther into the distance, and the faint murmur of the river and the sough of the wind alternating with the strains of the music, made an *ensemble* of inexpressible melancholy, a fitting setting to those words (which kept running in my head), 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.' One longed to persuade the bearers to leave their burden out in the fields, that one might spend the night in watching beside it, lamenting all our ingratitude, and forgetfulness of Him who is 'dopo si grande amor, si poco amato!'

But it was growing late, and the people were tired after their long slow march, so they carried the figure back into the church, and hastened off to talk about business over their wine, and the hot biscuits which were being concocted in the open street. There we left them, as we drove off in our little *diligence*, my thoughts still back in the hills, and sad at those words which still haunted me, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him,' which I know to be so despairingly true to many in these 'intellect-dominated' days. But yet hopeful in the belief that, though *here* they may never find Him, yet at the real Easter, He will, as with Mary of old, call them by their names, and they, too, will know Him, and answer 'Rabboni, which is to say, Master.'

E. VERE.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

BY LOUISA DUNDAS.

IV.

THE two Books of Samuel are actually one, there is no break, not even a pause, in the narrative. The best commentators think that 'two hands' took up the story after Samuel's death, and that while the double stream is distinctly perceptible in chaps. xxx., xxxi. of the first Book, the two converge again in Book II. But even with no formal division, there is this essential difference between the Books. The first is all transition; change, both religious and political; each new phase of national life, while linked with the past, is an upward step in Revelation. The second is exactly the opposite—settlement, instead of transition. The Jews, from a set of tribes, become a nation, developing the signs of united corporate life; while the three divinely typical offices, with their distinct threefold ministry, make the Church and Nation foreshadow henceforth Christendom and its Head. While several important characters come successively before us in Book I., here David dominates the whole; all other personages deriving their interest mainly from their greater or less connection with himself. And we, of course, as the fixed earthly rule devolves on the ancestor of Christ, watch intently the guiding, moulding, chastening of the type into a nearer semblance to the Prototype, than that attained by any other child of Abraham. God has ordained that, of all Old Testament characters, David is the one we know best.

This second Book falls into two divisions, the upward steps of David's prosperity (chaps. i.–x. incl.); his troubles and chastenings (xi.–xxiv.); a two-fold, not a three-fold division.* The tidings of Gilboa reach David at Ziklag, just as he is resting after his victory over Amalek. We need not try to reconcile the account with that already given of Saul's death. The man is palpably a liar, who, visiting the battle-field to rob the dead, had picked up half the story from some fugitive Israelite, viz., that the vanquished king had preferred death to dishonour. Now he seeks to win the rival's favour by bringing him the tokens of royalty, and representing himself as the slayer. David's act seems severe, especially to an alien, who could not know why Saul was to be reverenced; but it is one instance among many of hasty temper, and of course an Amalekite had little to expect from his mercy at that time. Above all, the generous spirit was galled by any supposition that he could rejoice in Saul's fate and profit by his death. As, careless of the Philistines' wrath, he summons his men to fast and mourn and weep, how plainly he must now see the mercy which had kept him back from taking part in the battle of Gilboa! Humbled and chafed by the mistrust and dislike of the Philistine lords, he has been saved from turning against his allies, or witnessing the cruel death of his friends; while that very mistrust has withheld him too from alliance or pledges which might fetter him now. David's lesson, he has passed on to all generations of the Church: 'O tarry thou the Lord's leisure.'* All is over—early loyalty, faithful service, met by growing distrust, jealousy, injustice, cruelty. Then, the seven years' exile, peril, hardship, banishment from God's people and His worship—all over now, 'beyond these voices there is Peace.' We know where his heart is, as we read the exquisite poem which follows—the only specimen, with one exception, left us of his secular poetry, i.e. not written for use in worship. It is one of the kind known to the Greeks as a Threnody or Dirge, reciting the virtues and bewailing the death of heroes; and here he pours out the fulness of the poet's soul. (v. 18.) This is an evident mis-translation in both our Versions.† There is no reason to suppose that Judah required to learn the use of the bow; and the information would be irrelevant in this place. The poem, called 'The Song of Kasheth,' i.e. The Bow, was placed with many others in a collection entitled 'The Book of Jashar' (the upright). The writer of Samuel II., inspired by the Spirit, probably transcribed it, like many of the Psalms, with an explanatory heading: 'For the children of Judah to learn by heart—Kasheth, from the Book of Jashar.' As to the song itself: there is no affected sorrow, no exaggeration of feeling, it is the grief of a patriot, a servant of God, a friend—in one. It consists of a series of apostrophes (v. 19), to the nation first: 'Thy glory, O Israel, is slain,' &c.—and the alien will rejoice. Gath must not hear it, the Philistine royal city; no, nor Askelon, the chief temple of their gods, lest their streets should ring with the women's shrill clamour, welcoming the slayers of the mighty dead. Then he addresses Gilboa with a curse—the most terrible to Eastern thought—'let there be no dew.' Where the heroes lay in their blood, let the heavens see to it, that not corn sufficient for 'the handful of first-fruits,' ripen again on the dreary land. Commentators differ as to the allusion to 'the shield.' It may be, to the custom of oiling shields before battle,‡ possibly omitted in the hurry of the onset, so that Saul's had been anointed not with oil but with his own blood, and then 'vilely cast away'—a great disgrace to a warrior in those times. The mention of Jonathan's bow, his famed weapon, explains the name of the poem. (v. 23.) But the pathos deepens as the dead are described—not in war, but in ordinary life. Again, there is no affectation. To a generous nature, death effaces all sense of wrong; but David had never lost his early love for Saul, who had moreover the power of inspiring a passionate loyalty to his own person. Father and son had doubtless been to each other 'lovely and pleasant' in life; and we may again bless the Wisdom which united them in death, removing Jonathan from a situation of almost insuperable difficulty, and leaving intact the model of such a friendship, with all its holy lessons. In antithesis to the mention of the heathen women, the poet bids the maidens and matrons of Israel weep for Saul, as they once had hailed his victories. As he had gathered a court, and fostered their love of rich attire, now let them cast aside their gay apparel and mourn. And with the refrain, the last apostrophe and the tenderest is reached: 'O Jonathan! slain in thine high places.' He possibly contrasts the easily-shaken love and faith of Michal, with the selfless affection of her brother. The face, last seen through the forest-shadows of Ziph; the eyes, never to meet his on earth again; the heart, true alike to father and to friend, above every ungenerous suggestion. Death has sealed securely to him for ever, 'the pale calm spectre of a blameless friend.' * And with the third renewal of the epode, the lament ends. In chap. ii. 2–6, we have its sequel in David's impulsive blessing to the men of Jabesh-Gilead, who by their daring and piety rescued the bodies of the slain from the gates of Beth-shan, giving them a funeral pyre, and a grave eastward of Jordan, thus requiting Saul's early deliverance of their city from the cruelty of Ammon.

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* We shall equalise the three following Lectures as far as possible, begging readers to fill in for themselves any gaps we may leave for want of space, by their own reading.

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* Ps. xxvii. was probably written at Hebron not long after.

† There is an exhaustive Note in the Speaker's Commentary.

‡ As Greek wrestlers oiled their bodies, that they might afford no grasp to an enemy.

David's position being now completely changed, he seeks counsel of God, and is directed to go to Hebron, which for seven and a half years became the royal city. Thither he removes his household, and being anointed by the elders of his tribe, he claims the allegiance of Judah, and by degrees of other parts of the country. (v. 8.) Abner now comes to the front, probably uncle to Saul, as well as chief captain. With unshaken loyalty to the reigning house, he sets up Saul's son, Ish-bosheth (Esh-baal), at the ancient sanctuary of Mahanaim, beyond Jordan. All the trans-Jordanic provinces, with the allied Ephraim and Benjamin, and Israel generally, adhere to him. Whether there is some years' interval between Gilboa and this action of Abner's, we cannot tell; but there is probably in v. 10 a similar error to that in 1 Sam. xiii. 1, of numbers dropped out or changed in copying. We know Ish-bosheth lived more than seven years after his father, and that his death ends the forty years' tenure of the kingdom by Saul's house. It may be that v. 9 recounts Abner's exploits in winning one province after another, occupying a

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* Lyra Apostolica, xviii.

space of five years, and that the reign is not reckoned till all this is achieved; still there is the difficulty of Ish-bosheth being forty years old; as this would make Jonathan very much older than David.* Abner, whether desiring to disturb David's supremacy, or possibly, to fix upon a site westward of Jordan in place of the more distant Mahanaim, for the dwelling of his king, now passes over to Gibeon, where he encounters Joab, the eldest of the three sons of Zeruiah; therefore holding the same relation to David, as kinsman and general, that Abner had borne to Saul. Abishai the second, and possibly Asahel the third brother, had followed David in his exile, the former appearing in the scene at Hachilah, as sharing David's adventure. The remains of a large tank or reservoir have helped travellers to identify El-Jib as Gibeon with its pool, on whose margin these rival champions meet, and propose to settle their difference by a combat like that of the Horatii and Curiatii.† In the encounter, and the battle which succeeds, Israel is beaten, and flies before Judah, the sons of Zeruiah following in hot pursuit. The young Asahel, with the lightness of foot learned on the cliffs of En-gedi, attaches himself to the task of capturing the rival general. Abner, not desiring to exert his strength against the youth, tries to turn him aside on some inferior pursuit, reiterating the warning, and alluding to former friendship with the elder brother. Still further, hoping merely to stay the runner's steps without killing him, he strikes with the blunt staff of his spear; but his strength of arm makes the blow fatal, and further, the sight of the victim in his blood brings the pursuers to a standstill, and enables the Israelitish captain to rally his scattered troop once more. There seems reason to think that Abner wished to propitiate Joab, but the rejoinder of the latter (v. 27) is obscure in the original. He may be reminding Abner that the combat was of his own seeking, or he may be defending himself from the imputation of wishing to prolong the slaughter. Peace being proclaimed, Abner and his men retreat through the deep intersecting 'wadys' across the Jordan to Mahanaim; while the surviving brothers lay the young Asahel in his father's grave at Bethlehem. His name occurs in 1 Chron. xii. among the 'valiant men;' but of his father, the husband of Zeruiah, we know nothing. This battle, 'or raid,' of Helkath-hazzurim, is described by Josephus.

(Chap. iii.) We cannot precisely tell how much time elapses during the 'long war,' probably a series of skirmishes, with the advantage on the side of Judah. (vv. 2–5.) The notice of David's family includes of course several years, and is important as showing the introduction of the whole Eastern system of harem life, as an accompaniment of royalty. Of Ahinoam we know nothing, but her son appears again. Chileab, Abigail's son, is believed to be 'Daniel' of 1 Chron. iii. Absalom's mother was possibly taken captive in war (1 Sam. xxvii. 8), her great grand-daughter, Maacah, is Rehoboam's wife. Adonijah, Haggith's son, perishes in his attempt to grasp the crown. Shephatiah, i.e. Jehoshaphat, becomes a royal name for the first time; of Abital we hear nothing. But of Eglah there is a remarkable tradition that she is Michal. It is difficult to account for the omission of this princess from this list, and that in 1 Chron. iii.; and equally so to understand the special title of Eglah in both lists: 'David's wife.' By Hebrew usage, the term would define the first-married.*

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* The subject is fully dealt with in the Speaker's Commentary. *Vide* Acts xiii. 21, where the Apostle speaks of the reigns of Saul and Ish-bosheth as one—forty years in length.

† Very common in settlement of tribal quarrels. *Vide* Sir W. Scott's combat of the Clans Chattan and Quhele—a real event.

And now Abner, seeing the feebleness of the house of Saul, seems to waver between trying to supersede the weak Ish-bosheth, or acquiesce in the rule of David; becoming himself general, and chief counsellor, as in Saul's days. His conduct regarding the widowed Rizpah is equivalent to an act of usurpation. She was probably an Edomite princess, and there was, in the Eastern mind, no dishonour in her position; it was that of an inferior, but perfectly legal wife, whose children could not inherit on equal terms, much the same in short as the 'morganatic marriage' of later times. It was held a right of conquest to take an adversary's wife, and to aspire to wed a princess was viewed as an attempt upon the crown; Ish-bosheth seems to have suspected Abner of some such design.† But the fierce retaliation to his feeble remonstrance makes him quail, while it shows us how completely Abner's mind had turned to alliance with David, and recognition of his divinely-appointed authority. David's condition to the treaty was due probably to a mingling of tenderness and policy. He remembered his earliest love, and desired to concilate the men of Israel by showing Saul's daughter as his queen. His message is nonimally to Ish-bosheth; but Abner seems to settle the matter in an arbitrary fashion, with little regard to the feelings of the parties. Bahurim is on the border of Benjamin, and strengthening his cause by the sight of Michal, about to return to Hebron, Abner dismisses Phaltiel and holds conferences with the elders of Israel and Benjamin, before proceeding with his convoy and their royal charge to Hebron. Of the meeting of the husband with the wife of his youth, the sister of Jonathan, Scripture tells us nothing. Meantime, Abner has a successful conference with David, the stripling he brought to Saul's tent after Ephes-dammim—now, the Anointed of the Lord. David's love of Saul's kindred probably moved him to welcome Abner, and all is smooth been the two old friends. But a deadly peril awaits the departing guest, an old companion turned to an enemy. As Joab returns with his men from 'a foray' (R. V. v. 22), and learns of Abner's visit, the indignant remonstrance shows all the latent envy and bitterness of his spirit. He sees his position endangered, and as he cannot stir David to suspicion of his guest's motives, he gets his more generous brother Abishai on his side, on the pretext of avenging Asahel's death. Josephus places the well of Sirah two miles and a half from Hebron; and pretending a desire for friendly talk, Joab invites his old ally to return thence, and then murders him exactly according to the mode of Asahel's death. David's grief is real, and his terrible curse on Joab's house is just. The act was cruel and base, and the 'law of Goel' could not excuse it. Asahel's death was in battle (v. 30), and could not justify the treacherous slaughter of an unarmed guest. Joab is forced to share in the general order for mourning over the slain, to witness the wailing of king and people, to feel himself 'a son of iniquity,'—as the poet-monarch again pours out his soul in a lament for his warrior friend, so foully done to death.* There is perfect sincerity in his words and actions, and this conduced greatly to his growing popularity; 'it was understood that it was not of the king to slay Abner.' David cannot punish Joab, but he remits him to the justice of God. We feel sorry that the brave and faithful Abishai is included in his bitter words of the 'sons of Zeruiah.' To him probably the young brother had been a great loss, and had with him shared David's exile; and Joab in his selfish ambition had stirred Abishai's feelings on this point, while the cowardly blow was given by himself alone.

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* St. Jerome and others accept the tradition and account for a later statement by the Rabbinical belief that Ithream's birth cost her her life.

† Some think he was Rizpah's son, which is possible; if so, Abner's right to the crown was as good as his own.

(Chap. iv.) The next act of violence is an inevitable sequence to Abner's fall. Ish-bosheth and his adherents 'were troubled,' and his own retainers turned against his supine rule. In v. 4, the casual mention of the weakly, crippled child, bearing for ever the marks of the terrible sack of Jezreel, is inserted to show how completely the dynasty had failed, and the hope of Benjamin come to nought. But the motive of the sons of Rimmon was probably a compound of selfish policy with an ancient grudge. Beeroth was a Gibeonite city, though its people had been considered as Benjamites, until the time of Saul's unwarrantable raid upon them in the early part of his reign; at which time many fugitives had taken refuge at Gittaim, an unknown place, unless it be Gath. Rechab and Baanah may therefore—as Gibeonites—have held themselves excused for what was nevertheless an act of base treachery to their master. (vv. 6, 7.) Two different statements are made as to the precise mode of attack, which, Hebraists think, betokena gain two narrators. The LXX. adds to v. 6 an explanation that a female porter, or slave, was busy sifting wheat while guarding the royal chamber, and that she had 'fallen asleep.' It was the noontide hour of siesta, and therefore the murderers expected to find the King unprepared. But when, escaping beyond Jordan, they bring their bloody trophy to Hebron, we need no interpretation of David's righteous indignation. With regard to Joab, he had been compelled to restrain his desire to punish; but with these sons of Rimmon he resolves, as in the case of the Amalekite at Ziklag, to show at once and for ever, that his favour cannot be won by treachery or violence to the surviving kindred of Saul. The execution was not only just but politic, and probably had its effect in turning the affection of the men of Israel towards himself.

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* David's two secular Odes testify to the 'common humanity' of Scripture, spoken of in the introduction to these Lectures. The Dead March, with the sob of a nation in its undertones, brings up Gilboa; and here, 'The King lifted up his voice and wept at the grave,' tells this age of its own mighty Dead. The spirit of Scripture never dies.

Chap. v. opens with the gathering of the chiefs of Israel at Hebron, with the proffer of their allegiance to David. Their address is both spirited and touching, as it shows a kindly recollection of his early years and ill-requited services in Saul's reign. There follows the third anointing of David as king of united Israel; the first occasion at Bethlehem typifying the setting apart in the Eternal Counsels of the Father, of His Incarnate Son; the second, at Hebron, the partial revelation of Our Lord as King, while on earth; and the third, the yet unfulfilled Prophetic Vision, when all things shall be subdued unto Him, and all enemies put under His feet.*

With the hosts now at his command, and still in the freshness of their first enthusiasm, David now prepares for the most significant of all his conquests, that of the future capital. Hebron, beautiful and fertile, with all its noble memories—it was the specially-blessed portion of Caleb and his children—was not fitted to be the seat of government, while everything pointed to the hill and fortress of Jebus, so exactly on the boundary-line of Judah and Benjamin, that it actually belonged to both tribes. From its position, with deep converging defiles on either side, the place was of immense strength, and was the very 'eye' of the country, commanding the passes to the north and south. Nothing had ever dislodged the Jebusites, one of the seven original tribes of Canaan, from this their renowned stronghold, and now, as he advances to its girdling rocks, he is greeted with a taunt, of which the sense is somewhat obscured in both our Versions.† It may be rendered thus (v. 6): 'Thou shall not come in, but the blind and lame will suffice to keep thee out.' This agrees with the opinion of Josephus, that the place, being deemed impregnable, aged and decrepid warriors were considered a sufficient garrison. David points out to his followers, that the weak point is in a certain runnel or water-course in the rocks (the same word in Ps. xlii. is translated 'water-pipe'). Here, where doubtless a little vegetation grew, an agile foot might venture, and a reward is offered, viz., headship of the host, to him who shall lead the way. The parallel passage in 1 Chron. xi. states this more plainly, adding that Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was the one who claimed the reward. The proverbial expression flowing from the remembrance of the day when David's spirit had been exasperated by the 'blind and lame' as his antagonists, affords an unconscious testimony to his popularity at this time. (v. 9.) Millo, i.e. 'the rampart,' seems to have been a part of the old Canaanitish works.* In this fort within a fort, David fixes his residence, occupying possibly two or three years in building round and within the rampart, 'the city of David;' assisted by Joab, who by the agility of foot inherited by his family, had attained the summit of his ambition. There is probably no event in earth's story so pregnant with results reaching beyond earth's time and space, as this capture of Jebus. Politically, it gave Judæa its centre of rule and influence, the needed rallying-point for its forces and affections. How dear and important to patriotic feeling, how blended henceforth with every valuable sentiment in Israel's children, was this 'city of David,' we may find in nearly every page of Holy Writ, and yet again, in the tears of David's Son! The Archetypal Prophet, Priest, and King, just about to found on the true Rock of Israel the Zion of His Church, yet could weep bitter tears over the fair earthly Zion's fall. And now that the very name is enshrined with our holiest thoughts—now that 'truly Jerusalem name we that shore,' where our redeemed and sanctified humanity is to attain its true life and eternal destiny in Him, we can understand the higher stage of Revelation made possible by this conquest, which set the King of God's own choosing upon His symbolic hill. But how shall those enter fully into the higher Revelation of the New Testament, who will not patiently 'search the Scriptures' of the Old, who will only view them as a collection of ancient documents, interesting perhaps and curious, but full of inaccuracies? We have the priceless treasure of God's Word, be it spoken or written, in earthen vessels—that is true. But with every imperfection in these, with every possible mistake of human writer, copyist, or translator (these are but motes in the sunbeam), there is withal untouched, unshaken, the background of Divine Teaching, never failing us for one moment; the guiding light, the sure testimony, the flowing stream of 'doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness.'

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* I Chron. xi., xii. should be compared for the full and interesting details given of the homage done by the different tribes.

† *Vide* 'Speaker's Commentary'; also, Note at the end of this Paper, by the Editor.

(v. 11.) The conquest of Zion attracted notice from beyond Judæa. The alliance with Tyre is the first on equal terms of friendship that we hear of. There is some difficulty among commentators as to the chronology of Hiram's reign, if he is the same as Solomon's ally, and there is no mention of a second. In architecture and decoration the Phœnician and Tyrian cities were celebrated throughout the known world at this date, earlier than that of any Greek art save the rudest. (v. 13.) The new list of wives and children is again anticipative, covering several years. But now, the Philistines, having watched with growing discontent the progress of their former fugitive guest, gather in great force and prepare for attack. We are bidden carefully to note the 'up' and 'down' of Scripture narratives as a great assistance in verifying localities.* In the present case, we understand by the prepositions the great danger which threatened the King and his new capital. Jerusalem is on the greatest altitude in the country, all other places are 'down' from it. The Philistines 'come up' towards Zion. David goes down to them, passing them by and going on to 'the stronghold'—believed to be Adullam.† By spreading themselves in the valley of Rephaim (Josh. xx. 8), they cut off David's return, and actually occupy Bethlehem, whence their next step would probably be to seize upon the half-finished capital. Zadok and Abiathar both are with the King, and by them he enquires of the Lord. At Baal-Perazim near Gibeon ‡ he gains a signal victory, rightly ascribing it to God. There follows the burning of the images left by the fugitive or slaughtered Philistines, and possibly in anger at this outrage to their gods, the invaders rush back to the charge, swarming again into Rephaim. A different answer is returned to David's enquiry; in place of attacking, he is to make a circuit behind the enemies till he reaches (R. V.) the wood of balsam-trees. It seems probable that this tree is the 'Baca' of the Arabs, literally 'the weeping tree,' the sap dropping like tears when any incision is made.' § But when a solemn 'marching' (the Hebrew word is very stately), sounds in the tree-tops, he may go on. Jehovah Sabaoth and His angel-hosts are going before him into battle. Every step of the beautiful story speaks to us of the conquest of right over wrong—reminds us of our Zion's spiritual warfare with unseen Leadership, and encircling armies of angels, 'marching as to war;' 'bestir thyself . . . for the Lord shall go out before thee,' comes home to the baptized.

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* A descriptive term, *vide* Judges ix. 6. *Vide* an interesting note, 'Speaker's Commentary' on 'Millo.'

(Chap. vi.) The most superficial reader must be struck with the remarkable contrast between David and his predecessor. Yet both rise by especial Divine ordinance, from a lower to a higher estate, both are singularly endowed with natural gifts, and both win their upward way to earthly prosperity by strength and prowess, as well as by the power which great warriors so often have—of winning the loyal affection of their followers. These are resemblances—where is the contrast? We see it in the spiritual life and condition of the two. Saul never once shows real love of God, independently of His gifts; David is filled with it. As Saul extends his conquests, little by little he declines from strict obedience; every fresh success is to David an occasion for renewed offering of thanks, fresh dedication of all God's gifts to His service. Now we find him again surrounded by his hosts, and the narrative which follows assures us that the real satisfaction he took in his conquests was the power they afforded him of extending through the nation the true worship of the God of their fathers—sadly eclipsed and defaced since the fall of Shiloh. Now the glad time has come, when Jebus is to become Jerusalem, the 'city of David,' the city of God, the Holy Place of the Tabernacle of the Most Highest. 'Baale of Judah' is of course Kirjath-Jearim, anciently 'Kirjath-Baal.' There the Ark had remained safe from hostile attacks, yet possibly half-forgotten by the generation arisen since its terrible capture by the heathen. There is a slight uncertainty as to whether the 'from' should not be 'to' Baale of Judah. Our revisers have preferred leaving it as the Old Syriac and Chaldee MSS. have it, besides the LXX., and we may supply the sense by supposing that only the backward journey is described, not that to Abinadab's house.* The R. V. gives a more exact rendering than the A. V. of the title of the Ark, which is very grand in the Hebrew: 'Upon which is called The Name, the Name of Jehovah-Saboath; Who sitteth upon the Cherubim.' Again, Gibeah is better rendered 'a hill,' which its name means; there is no ground for supposing it identical with any Gibeah of the sacred history.† Abinadab, as we have said,‡ was probably a Levite, but can scarcely have been living at this date, though his house would still bear his name; and Uzzah and Ahio his sons or grandsons are now entrusted with the actual conveyance of the Ark. It is a glorious picture indeed that rises before our eyes; and we see in it the sanctification of that higher stage of national life to which Israel had now attained. It was well that the tribes, laying aside all dividing jealousies and internecine strifes, should thus rally round their king, sharing in his enthusiastic joy, learning from him how 'blessed are the people that have the Lord for their God.' David's gifts of poetry and music no doubt came into full play. Besides many allusions and single passages, seven Psalms are said to have been composed, and others previously written modified, for the occasion.§ It would indeed be interesting to know more of the music and the instruments with which the singing was combined. As we read in 1 Chron. x. 23, David had gone on the lines already laid down by his great master, Samuel, in training and preparing those who were to lead the choral worship; thus consecrating his own pre-eminent musical gifts; and it is pleasant to think that Heman with his splendid voice, was grandson to Samuel, and probably gave assistance to the triumph-song of the chief Levites as they headed the procession. And now comes the shadow, always seen, alas! where the light is brightest. It had fallen on the joy at Beth-Shemesh, it falls again here. Uzzah's sin and its retribution require careful study, lest we misunderstand the warning to ourselves. What was his trespass? he was bound to secure the safety of the Ark, especially if the LXX and R. V. are correct: 'the oxen stumbled.' We read in Numb. iii., iv. the minute and precise orders given to the three chief Levite families, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, as to their respective charges in the service of the Sanctuary. Only the Kohathites (iii. 13) had concern with the Ark, and bore it, when travelling, on their shoulders by staves run into its rings. Abinadab and his sons were Levites, but possibly not of this house; if they were, they ought to have known better than to convey the Ark in an unauthorised way; all very well for the Philistines, not for the sons of Levi. Nor need we lay the whole blame upon Uzzah; his nation, king, priests, prophets alike must share it. David himself, in his impulsive eagerness, evidently overlooks the extreme care and reverence prescribed, by God Himself, as so essential in all that concerns the externals of His worship. We can understand how the long seclusion of the Ark among 'the trees of the wood,' nay, in some sort, the very wish to keep it safe from foreign invaders, had resulted in the growing up of a generation who could not remember Shiloh, and had by long disuse, ceased to observe many of the minuter directions laid down for the sons of Levi. Saul had taught his people to be inexact in fulfilling God's commands; now on the threshold of a new phase of national existence, when the token of His Presence was again to be in their midst, God brings Israel to a better mind, even by this check upon their full rejoicing. Let us bless Him for the lesson thus transmitted to ourselves, and own the Love to the many, thus veiling itself under the chastisement of one. There are different Jewish traditions as to the death of Uzzah: we prefer that supported by St. Jerome, that the arm withered to the shoulder, and that he sank down and died of the nervous shock. (v. 8.) The word 'displeased' would be more correctly 'grieved,' grief and anger combined. David's anger was doubtless against himself, and a due sense of holy fear comes upon him—he may not, after all, be doing what will be pleasing to the Lord; so till he can be sure he halts at 'the house of Obed-Edom.' There is more than one explanation of this passage. A Gittite means 'a man of Gath,' and some have thought that this may be one among many instances of an alien naturalised among God's people.* But in the parallel passages in 1 Chron. we find Obed-Edom's name among the sons of Merari, distinguished as a harp-player and a porter. If this be the same person, 'the Gittite' may mean that he at one time dwelt at Gath-rimmon, one of the Levite cities in Manasseh; many reasons might make a Levite change his place of residence, and yet retain his designation. It scarce seems probable that, suffering and perplexed about the death of Uzzah, and fearing sacrilege if he brought the Ark to his own city, David would have carried it to the house of an alien. When, on finally arranging for the completion of his good work, David again convenes the great men of Israel, we find that the terrible warning has been rightly used; for full details we must turn to 1 Chron. xv.: 'None ought to carry the Ark of God but the Levites;' not in 'new carts,' as the heathen had done, but in the specified and reverent way. So the Ark reaches Zion, and is placed in the tabernacle prepared for it, while the brilliant festival concludes with the feast upon the peace-offerings. But one more shadow falls on the King's joy. One has sat alone, haughty and unsympathising: Jonathan's sister, his restored wife. As David returns 'to bless his household,'* and is met by her proud sarcastic irony, a chill as of other times in a bitter past, comes over the sunshine of his soul. Saul's sin is visited on his race, his evil spirit of hard selfishness has descended to his child. David's rejoinder intentionally reminds her of her father's fall, under the Hand of the God in Whose service he has been employed this day. If we take the tradition already referred to (the Heb. of v. 23 allows of either meaning), the day of her child's birth saw Michal's death. Here, at least, there is a strange parallel between the captivity and the return of the Ark. One daughter of Israel we know dies, asking where is the glory? unable even to rejoice in her new-born child, when the Ark is taken. This one, without care for God's service, or sympathy with those who welcome the Ark's return, is, by this ancient tradition, called away at the crowning moment of earthly ambition, from the new-born child who probably would have inherited the crown, and carried on the line of David—a destiny greater than Saul or his daughter could understand. Whether we view Michal as childless, or as dying in child-birth, her story is surely full of warning to ourselves.

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* Lieut. Conder and Mrs. Finn both spoke to me on this point.

† *Vide* 'Speaker's Commentary.'

‡ 'The place of breaking forth' (Isaiah xxviii. 21).

§ It is conjectured that the 'Valley of Baca,' Ps. lxxxiv. 6, may take its name thus, giving great beauty to the meaning (R. V.).

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* 1 Chron. xiii. should be compared for interesting particulars of the conference with the tribes, the especial gathering of the Levites, and the important preparations made.

† Gibeah and Ramah are descriptive words, like 'Ben' in Scotland and 'Moel' in Wales.

‡ *Vide* Lecture II.

§ *Vide* Paragraph Bible for a complete list.

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* Dean Stanley thinks so, but I much prefer the suggested explanation in the 'Speaker's Commentary.'

(Chap vii.) This exquisite chapter lets us, as it were, into David's confidence—shows us in what way he is 'the man after God's own heart.' Only once again in Scripture does God the Holy Ghost unveil for us thus the inner devotion of a human heart, and that is when David's Son, God Incarnate, commends His Zion to the Father's love and care. David sits in the new-built palace of cedar, adorned by the Tyrian workmen; and the Lord has given him rest—from the many trials of earlier manhood, and the wars of later years. He turns at once to think of fresh offerings to Him Who giveth all. Perhaps no other Scripture words have more powerfully influenced hearts through all time to give of their abundance for God's service than these: 'See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the Ark of God dwelleth within curtains.' Nathan, so conspicuous hereafter, appears for the first time; a younger man, probably, than the King or his special seer, Gad, who had shared his exile. As a prophet, Nathan seems to be one of the highest stamp and greatest spiritual powers. His first answer is given eagerly on his own impulse; * his second, after a vision direct from on high. Much of the heavenly message is embodied in Psalm lxxvi., and the yet more specially Messianic lxxxix. Nathan recounts God's mercies to David up to v. 12 (there is no 'and' in Hebrew), then begins in a higher strain to utter one of the most striking and important prophecies in the Old Testament. The words, 'I will set up thy seed after thee,' we may refer on the authority of Holy Writ itself, in their nearer fulfilment to Solomon, and in their later, to Christ. (v. 18.) We have here David's own meditation as he 'sits before the Lord,' probably before the Ark in the Tabernacle. His heart is full—the prophet's words have stirred its depths, especially the dimly-glorious vista of 'a great while to come.' In the parallel verse of 1 Chron. xvii., an awful yet beautiful rendering is given on the margin: 'Thou hast looked upon me according to the order of the Adam from above, O Lord God.' † To those who can accept it, it does seem to indicate that in this solemn hour of communing in the Sanctuary, some mysterious foreknowledge was for the time vouchsafed to him of an ancestral greatness above all that earth and its kingdoms could afford. In v. 24 we find the promise to David linked with that to 'Abraham and his seed for ever;' the whole chapter, indeed, carries us back to the first call of the Chosen People, and forward to their development into the true Israel of God. When we lay vv. 28, 29 beside St. John xvii. 17, we see at once the unity of Scripture. David knows that God is true, and 'He hath promised,' therefore 'let it please Thee to bless the house of Thy servant.' David's Son, the 'Adam from above,' asks for His Zion: 'Sanctify them with Thy truth—Thy Word is Truth.' As, therefore, we read in this chap. vii. a higher stage of progressive Revelation than had before been vouchsafed, let us give renewed thanks to the Almighty Giver of the precious records, for the unassailable oneness of the teaching, the unimpeachable continuity of His blessed Word.

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* The expression seems to denote that harem seclusion had already begun.

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* As St. Jerome says, 'Ex se, non ex sermone Domini.'

† I confess to belief in this rendering, and in the vision thus vouchsafed to Our Lord's ancestor. The Paragraph Bible gives it, not the R. V., or the Oxford Bible.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

Questions for April.

31. Write a short note on David's Lament for the Battle of Gilboa.

32. Describe the double attack made by the Philistines (chap. v.), and its results.

33. Note shortly the connection in which these names occur: Baal-Perazim, Mahanaim, Hebron, Helkath-hazzurim, Sirah, Beeroth, Millo, Perez-Uzzah.

34. Describe the capture of Jebus, and state its importance as an event.

35. Narrate the details of Abner's last journey, and his death.

36. Write a short note on Asahel, Recab and Baanah, and Obed-Edom the Gittite.

37. Describe the removal of the Ark from Kirjath-Jearim.

38. Note any difference between Saul and David that strikes you in these seven chapters.

39. How is Saul's grandson mentioned; and what may we infer from the words?

40. Write a short paragraph on Michal, David's wife.

Answers to be sent not later than May 3rd to Miss L. Dundas, 37, Manor Place, Edinburgh.

In the 'Quarterly Statement' of the Palestine Exploration Society for 1877, p. 185, we are told that Captain Warren ascended by a secret underground passage from the Hill of Ophel to the Virgin's fount. Remarkably enough, Dr. Kennicott, the great Hebrew scholar of the last century, had declared his opinion that *Tzinner*, the Gutter, was a hollow, underground passage, by which the besieged went to draw water, and by which Joab climbed up into the heart of the city. Kennicott cites from Polybius an Arabian town, Rabatanana, which was taken in this manner. It was also the mode in which Naples was taken by Belisarius.

Class List for February.

Class I.

Verona	96	Iza	87	Gwen Ina Excelsior	80
Bubbles	93	Pyrethrum Sparrow	82	Daisy Winifred	79
Water Wagtail	92	Lucilla Moon	82	Constantine Aconite	75
Elphin Brown Bess	91	Celestine Hypatia	81		
Elpis	89				
Anonyma Greta	88				

Class II.

Shamrock	73	Firefly Carlotta	68	Ariel Atalanta Penholder Joiner	65
Ellen Rose Marie	70	Spectacles	66	Juno	57
Lady Bettina Lancelot	69				

IN MEMORIAM.

On February 8 the grave closed over all that was mortal of one who must not be left without some memorial of her life and work on earth. Sister Annette, of the Community of St. John Baptist, Clewer, came of a good old Irish family—Norman-Milesian—and had the best characteristics of both races, even to form and feature: ruling power, a high and noble freedom from low motives, warmth of heart, sense of humour and breadth of sympathy, clear and ready intellect, joined with the absolute love of truth we are apt to consider especially English.

She had been a much valued member of the Community nearly thirty years. About five-and-twenty years ago she was sent to Torquay for delicacy of the chest, brought on by labour amongst cholera patients, and the result of her sojourn there was the foundation of St. Raphael's Home for sick and convalescent women, and, later on, of St. Luke's Hospital for men, adjoining. From the first she was appointed Sister Superior of St. Raphael's, and thence she was called to her rest, after long suffering and weakness, on the 4th February.

Both these Homes were founded by means of her personal exertions and enlistment of the help and sympathy of others, which she had a marvellous gift of eliciting. Her own generous nature drew forth the generosity of others. Though not literally her own architect, her practical comprehensive judgment was shown in the plans and details of both Homes, for nothing was too insignificant to be considered in reference to the needs of her sick charges. Of her personal influence and work—she was 'the very pulse of the machine'—it is impossible to write fully. Only the Last Day will declare how many have owed to her, under God, renewed health of mind and body for work on earth, and blessedness for eternity. Nor was her work limited to the inmates under her wing. She seemed to bring out the best in all those with whom she came in contact; mean and evil thoughts and aims shrank away and shrivelled up in her genial, loving, yet withal, high and pure presence. And she was so hopeful of the best in *all*. In all baptized persons she seemed to see and reverence the Christ within, and in all humanity the nature which He had assumed and redeemed.

With all her sympathy and love, she was clear-sighted, and spoke the plainest truths to those who were acting unworthily or deceitfully. Yet the writer can say, from personal experience, that the most unpalatable truths were spoken with grave pity and respect for the person rebuked. Her courtesy was unfailing to high and low alike; never more shown than in her punctual replies to letters, and acknowledgments of gifts.

Sister Annette had great and exceptional gifts of organisation and rule, of intellect and heart, but—and in this she leaves an *imitable* example—she was greater in humility, love, purity, and single-hearted devotion to God—'her eyes were homes of silent prayer'—and it was in the power of communion with God that she did her work, and that that work was so blessed and increased. She was emphatically a loyal English churchwoman, truly Catholic, but distinctly un-Roman, without a doubt that the English Church is a branch of the True Vine, and while this communion in which she lived and worked and died brings forth such fruits as were shown in her life, who *may* doubt it?

From another Hand—

Though we know that the Divine Love, of which her beautiful life and character served as channels, will still flow on in this House of Charity, and though we believe that her intercessions still help forward the work, yet ends must be gained by means, and means in this world have largely to be material. Feelings of kindness towards suffering bodies need to be translated into material form before bodies can be benefited by amiable sentiment, and, as long as there is a connection between spirit and flesh, desire for spiritual welfare must be exercised in providing external religious helps, and for the supply of both of these, money, which can thus be made the root of much good, is necessary. Will all who know St. Raphael's Convalescent Home, Torquay, but who have been hitherto unaware that special efforts are now being made to raise funds, send an Easter offering to the Sister Superior there; and will all who do not know it, but who believe that 'Love is the fulfilling of the law,' send, of their charity, help to a noble work?

SPINNING JENNY.

DEBATABLE GROUND.

Are bazaars, and the entertainments belonging to them, justifiable for strictly religious purposes?

Church building is a direct offering to the glory of God, even as Mary offered the box of spikenard, but it is also a good work for man. A bazaar, at least from the buyer and spectator side, can lay no claim to the blessing of the free-offering; but, if the Church is regarded as a means of doing good to our fellow-creatures, it seems as if it might, as other good works do, use any innocent means of obtaining help. People who care very much for it get others, who care less, to help, by giving them a *quid pro quo*, and those who give time and talents do make a free-offering.

This seems a fair statement; but no doubt many people feel that, just as they would not hold the most immaculate sale of work *in* a church or *on* a Sunday, so a sort of irreverence clings to holding one *for* a church. Chelsea China ventures to think that, *theoretically*, this feeling is somewhat overstrained; but the practical difficulties are exceedingly great, and are connected with deeper difficulties still.

To run a great bazaar successfully, as things go now in a large town, almost as much skill is needed as if the object was personal gain. Unless the affair is new and attractive, enough money cannot be made to warrant the trouble. Good-natured people who possess this skill are not always very scrupulous as to the means employed, and unless the clergy and other parochial authorities really keep the affair well in hand, many things quite 'unjustifiable for a religious object' are likely to happen. Working on Sunday to get the room ready, rehearsing on Sunday for entertainments, foolish treating of workpeople, complications among young people of different ranks mixed up together in apparent but not real intimacy—a little experience will suggest many possibilities. And if the clergy and their chief helpers do give up their time to such careful supervision as shall keep everything straight, what else can they do at the time or for long beforehand. How is the ordinary parish work to be carried on without neglect or hurry?

Is a constant strenuous effort at money-getting compatible with a spiritual atmosphere? But then, is parochial debt compatible with it? Is abject poverty good for the soul of a parish any more than for that of a person? When a parish is always in a crisis, is nothing missed, in the midst of an enthusiastic and united effort to serve tables? Do we buy outward success and extension too dear?

Every sort of distinction may be drawn between sales of work and entertainments, bazaars for the main building and bazaars for decoration; but it seems to Chelsea China that this is the real question that some day will have to be faced. The little country bazaar, once in a life-time, is like the country parson's occasional dance at a Christmas party; the concerts, entertainments, bazaars, sales of work, theatricals, etc., of modern parochial life, are as if he spent all his time in fashionable society.

The answers may be put into three divisions—

In favour: *Dabricia*, who describes a charming little sale in a country place, showing all the good of joint effort, and none of the evils of money-seeking; *Ein Mädchen*, who decides in favour of bazaars with strong warnings against cheating, etc.; and *Emerald*, whose paper is given.

Definitely against: *Lucciola*, whose paper is given. *Beta*, who advises going without the thing required rather than getting it by a bazaar. *Dame Mary*, in a very interesting paper. We give her quotation from Dr. Pusey. It strikes the present generation as severe, but it is well to know the opinion of such an authority.

Chelsea China is sorry that there is no space for *Blackbird's* very amusing dialogue, which gives both sides, but sums up in opposition.

For the middle course, *Bath Brick* and *Bildad* send sensible papers, much to the same effect as *Polly's*, which is given.

Question.—Are bazaars, and the entertainments belonging to them, justifiable for strictly religious purposes?

Answer.—They are.

The *aim* of these functions is to collect funds, undoubtedly for a good cause, and though *mismanagement* and *abuse* of the *means* employed lead to ill-feeling and create discord, I do not think the ultimate object should be abandoned for this reason, or prevent bazaars and entertainments from being held.

It is known that large sums of money will be given at bazaars, when a much smaller amount would be forthcoming, or altogether withheld, under different circumstances. The love of social intercourse may have some influence in this case.

These assemblies should be well arranged and conducted.

Two abuses may be mentioned, which are detestable—

1. The habit of persecution, by which means money is literally extorted.

2. Raffling, which is against the law.—EMERALD.

With fashion dead against me, I begin with an emphatic 'No.' This is a shop-keeping age. Romance is at a discount, we are practical, business-like, methodical, above all, commercial. We are proud of it, and talk of the market-value of everything. We have forgotten how to *give*, we must have our *quid pro quo*. Now, of course, the spirit of an age—its *Zeit-Geist*, gets into everything. Like 'that charter'd libertine, the air,' it invades every department of thought; we cannot help this, but now and then we must fight this same *Zeit-Geist;* row against the current. One has to endure this vulgarising of every talent and charm—we have to see our friends' gifts and powers paraded in halls, set forth on platforms, their names on handbills, their performances food for the penny-a-liners, their every occupation, from sculpture to stocking-knitting, appraised and sold at its price, and we are expected to rejoice over the money-value of what used to be dear for its own dear sake; well, so let it be. Let works of philanthropy and benevolence be promoted in this way rather than go undone. But if I am asked, shall the 'bazaar system' be applied to works whose sole essence is 'a free-will offering unto God,' I say calmly and advisedly, let that work stand over till the whole amount needed can be provided by free-will offerings alone. Let the work go undone, rather than bring into the service of the sanctuary the buying and selling, the pleasure-seeking on one side, the possibly inevitable ostentation and self-exhibition on the other. I have heard of good people who, feeling the incongruity of ideas, insisted on using the term 'sale of work' instead of bazaar, when the object was distinctly religious. The very scruple showed an uneasy conscience. If the action was right, the Oriental term 'bazaar' was no sin; if it was wrong, 'sale' was the very thing that was objectionable. I know well how many pleas can be urged in favour of such things, how those who have little but time and trouble to give are thus enabled to give of their little. I know we are forbidden rashly to root up tares, lest we destroy our precious grain of wheat with them. But I believe that if Churchwomen would make a resolute stand against the whole system where the more immediate service of God is concerned, a great and growing evil would be mitigated, a great national sin prevented. 'What a man soweth, that shall he reap.' If we sow a spirit of selfish grudging in God's service, what will our 'reaping' be? If women lead in this matter, men will be constrained to follow—and they will probably do so gladly.—LUCCIOLA.

Dr. Pusey's burning words, on the subject of helping the sufferers by the Irish famine, have no uncertain sound; are they not even *more* applicable when the object is the good of souls?

They shall end this paper.

'We dare not, surely, brethren, as has been done heretofore, enlist vanities in the ministration to such misery; we dare not mock God, or the sorrows of the perishing, by offering relief gained by frivolities or amusements. Such things, at all times, eat out the very bowels of true charity. But in the sight of death striking down its thousands, sparing neither young nor old, sweeping away the strong and healthy, and in some forms reaching to such as ourselves, whom

God has hitherto exempted from sufferings, they are more hideous than bodily death. It were like dancing on the graves of the dead! To speak plainly, such things as are heard of, acting plays, visiting theatres, making purchase of vanities, balls, for the relief of Irish famine, to soothe the intense misery of human beings, now in form often scarce human, wasting, and parched away and dried up with famine and fever and pestilence, and at times bereft of reason itself, what were it but a mockery of God and man?'—Dame Mary.

As in so many other things, may not a middle course be the true one? Surely the objectionable parts of a bazaar are the exorbitant prices (really almost a form of cheating and extortion), the badgering of unwilling purchasers, the flirtations (it may be), the various lotteries and raffles, especially when (as happens sometimes), tickets amounting to more than even the bazaar value of the article are sold, an expedient savouring only too much of dishonesty.

All this seems to me incongruous—nay, wrong. Oh! but, we are told, the buyers do not expect their money's worth, and there is no other way in which the amount can be raised; for people will spend pounds in making and hiring or collecting things for a bazaar, and then in buying at it, when they would only give shillings if asked to pay direct without all this trouble and excitement.

It is too true; and perhaps this trait of human nature in the nineteenth century cannot be quickly cured, and the fashion must wear itself out; but still we might do much if (especially when the object is a religious one) we would all try to promote, instead of bazaars, with all the objectionable features above mentioned, simple sales of work, fancy articles and toys, etc., at *fair and reasonable* prices; excluding trash as much as possible, and putting a stern veto on raffles and such-like proceedings.

Granted that as large sums cannot be realised in this way as by the various devices and shifts of a bazaar; but is not fair and honest dealing a jewel beyond all price? and if we do not hold closely to it, are we not, in point of fact, doing evil that good may come?—Polly.

Chelsea China has received from *E. P. M.* a very strong warning against the dangers of thought-reading from personal experience, showing that the power once gained may disturb existing relations and lead to much trouble.

Question for April.

Is a strong sense of responsibility always advantageous to a character? (Suggested.)

Answers to be sent to Chelsea China, care of the Publishers, by May 1st.

CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY.

The Conversion of Germany.

Questions for April.

13. What were the three groups of missionaries who attempted the Conversion of Germany? and what were the qualifications of each group?

14. Give the mission fields of some of the chief names in each group.

15. Give two or three lines on each of the following names, with a longer account of one: St. Gall, St. Eligius, St. Wulfram, St. Gregory of Utrecht, St. Adalbert, St. Liudger, St. Walpurga.

16. A life of St. Boniface.

Answers to be sent to Bog-Oak, care of the Publishers, by May 1st.

January Class List.

First Class.

Cocksamoor	36	Water Wagtail	34	Andromache	32
Papaver		Firenze		March	
Polypodium		Sycorax		Ierne	31
Verena		Sophy		Kentigern	30
Λαμβδα		Etheldreda	33	Fidelia	
Charissa	35	Dubritia		Hegesippus	
		Violets			

Second Class.

Vorwärts	29	Scholastica	27	*Decima	24
Countess		Veritas	26	Vivia	
Bluebell	28	Antigone		Honeysuckle	
Malacoda		Spider		*Felix	23
Καθολικος	27	King Cole	25	Gemma	
		Ina			

Third Class.

Budgerigar	19	Beryl	17	*Trudel	15
*Cecilia				Esclairmond	14

* Three answers only.

Remarks.

1. On the whole, *Cocksmoor* and *Water Wagtail* give St. Benedict and his Rule with the greatest perception of the spirit which animated both. *Andromache:* Is there any evidence that St. Benedict's parents objected to his life? *Etheldreda:* Subiaco is reckoned his first monastery—Monte Cassino was not founded till

520. *Decima:* Theodoric cannot be said to have 'made havoc of Rome.' He entered it in great splendour, *circ.* A.D. 200. Hardly any one gives Lauds as the first Dayhour, said just before dawn. The rest are Prime, about 6 A.M. Terce not later than 9. Sext, noon. None, 3 P.M. Vespers before sunset, and Compline at bedtime. Mattins (consisting of three Nocturns) is the Night Office. '*Midnight* Lauds were in Melrose sung,' either means that Scott did not know the Hours, or that a lazy Community said it with Mattins at midnight, to avoid being disturbed again. In some convents None, followed immediately by Vespers, was said at 2 P.M. After which dinner might be served on fast days. *Decima:* There is no such word as *Virgilæ*, Mattins being the Night Office. The Vow of Stability (in the technical sense of remaining always in one Order) was not in the original Rule. But all Benedictine vows were for life. Hence St. Benedict is said to have given stability to the monastic life. The Pope, however, could (and can) dispense even a Benedictine's vows. *Polypodium* is mistaken in thinking a Postulant could not draw back. Even a novice was free to do so, till his solemn Profession. *Several Members:* St. Benedict ordered *one* year's novitiate; it was St. Gregory who lengthened it to two.

2. Fifty-six Benedictines, and several who were not, have been given in the various papers, but the twelve most popular have been SS. Scholastica, Maur, Placidus, Ildefonso, Benedict of Aniane, Gregory, Augustine, Benedict Biscop, Bede, Boniface, Anskar, and Dunstan. The best selections are by *Water Wagtail*, *Papaver*, and *Verena*. Saints of the reformed Orders should have been reserved for the December paper, even the Founders, unless they were Benedictines first. The following are the chief mistakes: Members must appropriate their own. Oratorians are not Benedictines. San Carlo Borromeo lived as a secular priest, though he held the revenues of more than one Abbey; and his Order, the *Oblati*, is not Benedictine, and must not be confounded with the *Oblate*, a female Order of Olivetans, founded by Santa Francesca Romana. SS. Bruno, Bernard of Clairvaux, Hugo of Grenoble, were not Benedictines, but Carthusian and Cistercian. Gregory VII. was a Cluniac. St. Chad and St. Hilda, Order of Iona (Whitby afterwards became Benedictine); St. Peter Damian belonged to the Camaldolesi; the Premonstratensian was an Augustinian Order.

Water Wagtail: Willibrod's Mission was before St. Boniface's. *Vorwärts:* Undoubtedly St. Gregory the Great and St. Augustine were *bonâ fide* Benedictines of St. Andrea on the Cælian. The latter brought the Order to Canterbury; Benedict Biscop (who by the way was not a Bishop, as *Felix* says) took it north, and so Bede was a Benedictine. Bog-Oak objects to some Members calling such men as Augustine *Missioners*. This 19th-century term for conductors of temporary parochial missions distinguishes them from missionaries proper.

3. Very few have given the famous Houses, yet remembering Monte Cassino, San Gregorio, Glanfeuil, St. Cloud, St. Denis, Wearmouth, Jarrow, St. Alban's, Barking, Ely, Nutshall, Fulda, Dunfermline, Coldingham, Wilton, St. Michael's Mount, Fontevraud, Bec, and many another, it would have made a good answer. *Antigone* gives a capital description of Abingdon. The Orders are more popular; but the Carmelites should be reckoned among Mendicant Orders. Trench names it as 'a new Order,' but not as Benedictine—while Gilbertines were Augustinians. Clugny was, *strictly* speaking, more a 'congregation' than an Order, but that may pass. Melrose became the headquarters of Cistercians in Scotland. *Beryl* gives only modern 19th-century Benedictine houses in this country, which, whatever they may become, are not famous as yet!

4. Beginning with religious benefits, the Church owed her earlier Religious Orders a debt. I. For a High Ideal of Life, shown: 1st. In the *example of countless saints*, as Bishop Andrews says, by 'their faith and hope; their labours and truth; their bravery and zeal; their learning and seclusion; their chastity and simplicity.' 2nd. In *the frequently offered prayers* and intercessions; one result being the careful formulation of the Divine office in the Gregorian and other uses. II. For their Direct Work for the Church, viz.: 1st. *Mission work* at home and abroad. 2nd. *Care of the young* in their schools. 3rd. *Care of the Poor*—the widow and the orphan. 4th. *Care of the Sick* in Hospitals, etc. III. For their Work of Civilisation, including 1st. *Literature*, the transcription and study of sacred and secular authors—the production of learned works. 2nd. *The encouragement of the Arts*, as music and (later) painting. 3rd. *The consecration of the labour of the hands*, working as artificers in metal, glass, etc., as not only magnificent architects, but as the actual builders; and even more in those agricultural labours which the very term *servile* work, reveals to have been thought appropriate only to slaves. 4th. Growing out of this *the emancipation of slaves*. *Fidelia* and others give more what the *world* owes than the Church. *Spider:* Barbarism is really not a heresy!

Subscriptions received from *Violets*, *Honeysuckle*, *Water Wagtail*, *Budgerigar*, *Beryl*, *Veritas*, *Charissa*, *Felix*, *Ierne*, *De Maura*, *Dubritia*, *Countess*, *King Cole*, *Malacoda*, *Sycorax*, *Verena*, *Hegesippus*, *Etheldreda*, *Sophy*, *Scholastica*, *Decima*, *Λαμβδα*, *Antigone*, *White Owl*, *Ina*, *Papaver*, *Cecilia*, and *Theodore*.

Any who have not already done so, should forward their subscription with their next paper.

Notices to Correspondents.

The winners of prizes in 'French Liturature' are *Pertheiren*, 492, *Hermione*, 481. Will they send their addresses to the Publisher?

The Clewer Sisters would be most grateful for gifts of clothing, new or old, for their work in two East-End parishes. Please address 53, St. Leonard's Road, Poplar.

May a student of Welsh be allowed to point out that in one of your able 'Lectures on Church History,' 'Caer gwent' is said to mean the 'white city,' which would be the meaning of Caer gwen, or (in modern Welsh) wen? Gwent is said to mean 'a fair and open region,' un pays viant, and is a name for part of Monmouthshire.
Caer originally meant a wall, e.g. caer mynwent=churchyard wall.

Whether rightly or wrongly, the tradition of Winchester has always been that it is the white city, and its chalky situation in a narrow valley suits the name better than one meaning, 'fair and open region.' Surely caer is used for castrum!—Ed.

A. B. Hurd begs for information about St. Kilda—the saint—not the island, and the name of any book with an account of him or her.

Quotations found—

M. E. S.—The poem 'Begin again' is in a small volume, 'Songs of Perseverance,' published by Nesbit. Essie.

The lines quoted by *M. G. S.* in the January 'Monthly Packet,' beginning—

'Get up, get up, for shame,
The blooming morn,'

is from a poem by Herrick, called 'Winna's Maying.' It is in the Golden Treasury. A. A. Keary.

E. S. and other correspondents beg to tell *A. M.* that—

'Men may rise on stepping stones'

surely belongs to the first verse of Tennyson's 'In Memoriam.'

Quotations wanted—

'To know the heart of all things was his duty,
  All things did sing to him to make him wise;
And with a sorrowful and conquering beauty,
  The soul of all looked grandly from his eyes.

He gazed on all within him and without him,
  He watched the flowing of Time's steady tide,
And shapes of glory floated all about him.
  And whispered to him and he prophesied.'

G. P. B. E.

'I sing at six to let men know,
When to and from their work to go.'

Query.

'Our apprehensions mar our joys more than our sorrows do.'

Pearl.

The Monthly Packet.

MAY, 1890.

TWO PENNILESS PRINCESSES.

CHAPTER V.

THE MEEK USURPER.

'Henry, thou of holy birth,
Thou to whom thy Windsor gave
Nativity and name and grave!
Heavily upon his head
Ancestral crimes were visited.'—*Southey.*

It suits not with the main thread of our story to tell of the happy and peaceful meetings between the Lady of Glenuskie and her old friend, who had given up almost princely rank and honour to become the servant of the poor and suffering strangers at the wharves of London. To Dame Lilias, Mother Clare's quiet cell at St. Katharine's was a blessed haven of rest, peace, and charity, such as was neither the guest chamber, nor the Prioress's parlour at St. Helen's, with all the distractions of the princesses' visitors and invitations, and with the Lady Joanna continually pulling against the authority that the Cardinal, her uncle, was exerting over his nieces.

His object evidently was to keep them back, firstly from the York party, and secondly from the King, under pretext of their mourning for their mother; and in this he might have succeeded, but for the interest in them that had been aroused in Henry by his companion. namesake, and almost brother, the King of Wight. The King came or sent each day to St. Helens to arrange about the Requiem at Westminster, and when their late travelling companions invited the young ladies to dinner or to supper expressly to meet the King or the Cardinal—not in state, but at what would be now called a family party—Beaufort had no excuse for a refusal, such as he could not give without dire offence. And, indeed, he was even then obliged to yield to the general voice, and recalling his own nephew from Normandy, send the Duke of York to defend the remnant of the English conquests.

He could only insist that the Requiem should be the first occasion of the young ladies going out of the convent; but they had so many visitors there that they had not much cause for murmuring, and the French instructions of Sister Beata did not amount to much, even with Eleanor, while Jean loudly protested that she was not going to school.

The great day of the Requiem came at last. The Cardinal had, through Sir Patrick Drummond and the Lady, provided handsome robes of black and purple for his nieces, and likewise palfreys for their conveyance to Westminster; and made it understood that unless Lady Joanna submitted to be completely veiled, he should send a closed litter.

'The doited auld carle!' she cried, as she unwillingly hooded and veiled herself. 'One would think we were basilisks to slay the good folk of London with our eyes.'

The Drummond following, with fresh thyme sprays, beginning to turn brown, was drawn up in the outer court, all with black scarves across the breast—George Douglas among them, of course—and they presently united with the long train of clerks who belonged to the household of the Cardinal of Winchester. Jean managed her veil so as to get more than one peep at the throng in the streets through which they passed, so as to see and to be seen; and she was disappointed that no acclamations greeted the fair face thus displayed by fits. She did not understand English politics enough to know that a Beaufort face and Beaufort train was the last thing the London crowd was likely to applaud. They had not forgotten the penance of the popular Duke Humfrey's wife, which, justly or unjustly, was imputed to the Cardinal and his nephews of Somerset.

But the King, in robes of purple and black, came to assist her from her palfry before the beautiful entry of the Abbey Church, and led her up the nave to the desks prepared around what was then termed 'a herce,' but now called a catafalque, an erection supposed to contain the body, and adorned with the lozenges of the arms of Scotland and Beaufort, and of the Stewart, in honour of the Black Knight of Lorn.

The Cardinal was present, but the Abbot of Westminster celebrated. All was exceedingly solemn and beautiful, in far different style from the maimed rites that had been bestowed upon poor Queen Joanna in Scotland. The young King's face was more angelic than ever, and as Psalm and supplication, dirge and hymn arose, chanted by the full choir, speaking of Eternal Peace, Eleanor bowed her head under her veil, as her bosom swelled with a strange yearning longing, not exactly grief, and large tears dropped from her eyes as she thought less of her mother than of her noble-hearted father; and the words came back to her in which Father Malcolm Stewart, in his own bitter grief, had told the desolate children to remember that their father was waiting for them in Paradise. Even Jean was so touched by the music, and carried out of herself, that she forgot the spectators, forgot the effect she was to produce, forgot her struggle with her uncle, and sobbed and wept with all her heart, perhaps with the more *abandon* because she, like all the rest, was fasting.

With much reverence for her emotion, the King, when the service was over, led her out of the church to the adjoining palace, where the Queen of Wight and the Countess of Suffolk, a kinswoman through the mother of the Beauforts, conducted the ladies to unveil themselves before they were to join the noontide refection with the King.

There was no great state about it, spread, as it was, not in the great hall, but in the richly-tapestried room called Paradise. The King's manner was most gently and sweetly courteous to both sisters. His three little orphan half-brothers, the Tudors, were at table; and his kind care to send them dainties, and the look with which he repressed an unseasonable attempt of Jasper's to play with the dogs, and Edmund's roughness with little Owen, reminded the sisters of Mary with 'her weans,' and they began to speak of them when the meal was over, while he showed them his chief treasures, his books. There was St. Augustine's 'City of God,' exquisitely copied; there was the 'History of St. Louis' by the bon Sire de Joinville; there were 'Sir John Froissart's Chronicles,' the same that the good Canon had presented to King Richard of Bordeaux.

Jean cast a careless glance at the illuminations, and exclaimed at Queen Isabel's high head-gear, and her becloaked greyhound. Eleanor looked and longed, and sighed that she could not read the French, and only a very little of the Latin.

'This you can read,' said Henry, producing the 'Canterbury Tales'; 'the fair minstrelsy of my Lady of Suffolk's grandsire.'

Eleanor was enchanted. Here were the lines the King of Wight had repeated to her, and she was soon eagerly listening as Henry read to, and with, her the story of 'Patient Grisell.'

'Ah! but is it well thus tamely to submit?' she asked.

'Patience is the armour and conquest of the godly,' said Henry, quoting a saying that was to serve 'the meek usurper' well in after times.

'May not patience go too far?' said Eleanor.

'In this world, mayhap,' said he; 'scarcely so in that which is to come.'

'I would not be the King's bride to hear him say so,' laughed the Lady of Suffolk. 'Shall I tell her, my lord, that this is your Grace's ladder to carry her to heaven?'

Henry blushed like a girl, and said that he trusted never to be so lacking in courtesy as the knight; and the King of Wight, wishing to change the subject, mentioned that the Lady Eleanor had sung or said certain choice ballads, and Henry eagerly entreated for one. It was the pathetic 'Wife of Usher's Well' that Eleanor chose, with the three sons whose hats were wreathen with the birk that—

'Neither grew in dyke nor ditch,
Nor yet in any shaugh,
But at the gates of Paradise
That birk grew fair eneugh.'

Henry was greatly delighted with the verse, and entreated her, if it were not tedious, to repeat it over again.

In return, he promised to lend her some of the translations from the Latin of Lydgate, the Monk of Bury, and sent them, wrapped in a silken neckerchief, by the hands of one of his servants to the Convent.

'Was that a token?' anxiously asked young Douglas, riding up to David Drummond, as they got into order to ride back to Winchester House, after escorting the ladies to St. Helens.

'Token, no; 'tis a book for Lady Eelen. Never fash yourself, man; the King, so far as I might judge, is far more taken with Eelen than ever he is with Jean. He seems but a bookish sort of bodie of Malcolm's sort.'

'My certie, an' that be sae, we may look to winning back Roxbugrh and Berwick!' returned the Douglas, his eye flashing. 'He's welcome to Lady Eelen! But that ane should look at her in presence of her sister! He maun be mair of a monk than a man!'

Such was, in truth, Jean's own opinion when she flounced into her chamber at the Priory, and turned upon her sister.

'Weel, Eelen, and I hope ye've had yer will, and are a bit shamed, taking up his Grace so that none by yersell could get in a word wi' him.'

''Deed, Jeanie, I could not help it; if he would ask me about our ballants, and buiks that ye would never lay your mind to——'

'Ballants and buiks! Bonnie gear for a King that should be thinking of spears and jacks, lances and honours. Ye're welcome to him, Eelen, sin ye choose to busk your cockernonny at ane that's as good as wedded! I'll never have the man who's wanting the strick of carle hemp in the making of him!'

Eleanor burst into tears and pleaded that she was incapable of any such intentions towards a man who was truly as good as married. She declared that she had only replied as courtesy required, and that she would *not* have her harp taken to Warwick House the next day, as she had been requested to do.

Dame Lilias here interposed. With a certain conviction that Jean's dislike to the King was chiefly because the grapes were sour, she declared that Lady Eelen had by no means gone beyond the demeanour of a douce maiden, and that the King had only shown due attention to guests of his own rank, and who were nearly of his own age. In fact, she said, it might be his caution and loyalty to his espoused lady, that made him avoid distinguishing the fairest.

It was not complimentary to Eleanor, but Jean's superior beauty was as much an established fact as her age, and she was pacified in some degree, agreeing with the Lady of Glenuskie that Eleanor was bound to take her harp the next day.

Warwick House was a really magnificent place, its courts, gardens, and offices covering much of the ground in the city that still bears the name, and though the establishment was not quite as extensive as it became a few years later, when Richard Nevil had succeeded to his brother-in-law, it was already on a magnificent scale.

All the party who had travelled together from Fotheringay were present, besides the King, young Edmund and Jasper Tudor, and the Earl and Countess of Suffolk; and the banquet, though not a state one, nor encumbered with pageants and subtilties, was even more refined and elegant than that at Westminster, showing, as all agreed, the hand of a mistress of the household. The King's taste had been consulted, for in the gallery were the children of St. Paul's choir and of the chapel of the household, who sang hymns with sweet trained voices. Afterwards, on the beautiful October afternoon; there was walking in the garden, where Edmund and Jasper played with little Lady Anne Beauchamp, and again King Henry sought out Eleanor, and they had an enjoyable discussion of the 'Tale of Troie,' which he had lent her, as they walked along the garden paths. Then she showed him her cousin Malcolm, and told of Bishop Kennedy, and the schemes for St. Andrews, and he in return described Winchester College, and spoke of his wish to have such another foundation as Wykeham's under his own eye near Windsor, to train up the godly clergy, whom he saw to be the great need and lack of the church at that day.

By-and-by, on going in from the garden, the King and Eleanor found that a tall, grey-haired gentleman, richly, but darkly clad, had entered the hall. He had been welcomed by the young King and Queen of Wight, who had introduced Jean to him. 'My uncle of Glocester,' said the King, aside. 'It is the first time he has come among us since the unhappy affair of his wife. Let me present you to him.'

Going forward, as the Duke rose to meet him, Henry bent his knee and asked his fatherly blessing, then introduced the Lady Eleanor of Scotland—'who knows all lays and songs, and loves letters, as you told me her blessed father did, my fair uncle,' he said, with sparkling eyes.

Duke Humfrey looked well pleased as he greeted her. 'Ever the scholar, Nevoy Hal,' he said, as if marvelling at the preference above the beauty, 'but each man knows his own mind. So best.' Eleanor's heart began to beat high! What did this bode? Was this King fully pledged? She had to fulfil her promise of singing and playing to the King, which she did very sweetly, some of the pathetic airs of her country, which reach back much further than the songs with which they have in later times been associated. The King thoroughly enjoyed the music, and the Duke of York came and paid her several compliments, begging for the song she had once begun at Fotheringay. Eleanor began—not perhaps so willingly as before, but strangely, as she sang—

> 'Owre muckle thinking blindeth the ee, lass,
> Owre muckle thinking changeth the mind,'

her face and voice altered. Something of the same mist of tears and blood seemed to rise before her eyes, as before—enfolding all around. Such a winding sheet which had before enwrapt the King of Wight, she saw it again—nay, on the Duke of Glocester there was such another, mounting—mounting to his neck. The face of Henry himself grew dim and ghastly white, like that of a marble saint. She kept herself from screaming, but her voice broke down, and she gave a choking sob.

King Henry's arm was the first to support her, though she shuddered as he touched her, calling for essences, and lamenting that they had asked too much of her in begging her to sing what so reminded her of her home and parents.

'She hath been thus before. It was that song,' said Jean, and the Lady of Glenuskie coming up at the same time confirmed the idea, and declined all help except to take her back to the priory. The litter that had brought the Countess of Salisbury was at the door, and Henry would not be denied the leading her to it. She was recovering herself, and could see the extreme sweetness and solicitude of his face, and feel that she had never before leant on so kind and tender a supporting arm, since she had sat on her father's knee. 'Ah! sir, you mind me of my blessed father,' she said.

'Your father was a holy man, and died well-nigh a martyr's death,' said Henry. ''Tis an honour I thank you for to even me to him—such as I am.'

'Oh, sir! the saints guard you from such a fate,' she said, trembling.

'Was it so sad a fate—to die for the good he could not work in his life?' said Henry.

They had reached the arch into the court. A crowd was round them, and no more could be said. Henry kissed Eleanor's hand, as he assisted her into the litter, and she was shut in between the curtains, alone, for it only held one person. There was a strange tumult of feeling. She seemed lifted into a higher region, as if she had been in contact with an angel of purity, and yet there was that strange sense of awful fate all round, as if he were nearer the martyr than the angel. And was she to share that fate? The generous young soul seemed to spring forward with the thought that come what might it would be hallowed and sweetened with such as he! Yet withal there was a sense of longing to protect and shield him.

As usual, she had soon quite recovered, but Jean pronounced it 'one of Eelen's megrims,' as if she were a Hielander to have second sight.

'But,' said the young lady, 'it takes no second sight to spae ill to yonder King. He is not one whose hand will keep his head, and there are those who say that he had best look to his crown, for he hath no more right thereto than I have to be Queen of France!'

'Fie, Jean, that's treason?'

'I'm none of his, nor ever will be! I have too much spirit for a gudeman who cares for nothing but singing his psalter like a friar.'

Jean was even more of that opinion, when the next day, at York House, only Edmund and Jasper Tudor appeared with their brother's excuses. He had been obliged to give audience to a messenger from the Emperor. 'Moreover,' added Edmund disconsolately, 'to-morrow he is going to St. Albans for a week's penitence. Harry is always doing penance, I cannot think what for. He never eats marchpane in church—nor rolls balls there.'

'I know,' said Jasper sagely. 'I heard the Lord Cardinal rating him for being false to his betrothed—that's the Lady Margaret, you know.'

'Ha!' said the Duke of York, before whom the two little boys were standing. 'How was that, my little man?'

'Hush, Jasper,' said Edmund, 'you do not know.'

'But I do, Edmund; I was in the window all the time. Harry said he did not know it, he only meant all courtesy; and then the Lord Cardinal asked him if he called it loyalty to his betrothed to be playing the fool with the Scottish wench? And then Harry stared—like thee, Ned, when thy bolt had hit the Lady of Suffolk; and my Lord went on to say that it was perilous to play the fool with a king's sister, and his own niece. Then, for all that Harry is a king and a man grown, he wept like Owen, only not loud, and he went down on his knees and he cried, "*Mea peccata, mea peccata, mea infirmitas*," just as he taught me to do at confession. And then he said he would do whatever the Lord Cardinal thought fit, and go and do penance at St. Albans, if he pleased, and not see the lady that sings any more.'

'And, I say,' exclaimed Edmund, 'what's the good of being a king and a man, if one is to be rated like a babe?'

'So say I, my little man,' returned the Duke, patting him on the head. Now to his own two boys. 'Take your cousins and play ball with them, or spin tops, or whatever may please them.'

'There is the king we have,' quoth Richard Nevil, 'to be at the beck of any misproud priest, and bewail with tears a moment's following of his own will like other men.'

Most of the company felt such misplaced penitence and submission, as they deemed it, beneath contempt; but while Eleanor had pride enough to hold up her head so that no one might suppose her to be disappointed, she felt a strange awe of the conscientiousness that repented when others would only have felt resentment—relief, perhaps, at not again coming into contact with one so unlike other men as almost to alarm her.

Jean tossed up her head, and declared that *her* brother knew better than to let any bishop put him into leading-strings. By-and-by there was a great outcry among the children, and Edmund Tudor and Edward of York were fighting like a pair of mastiff-puppies, because Edward had laughed at King Harry for minding what an old shaveling said. Edward, though the younger, was much the stronger, and was decidedly getting the best of it, when he was dragged off and sent into seclusion with his tutor for misbehaviour to his guest.

No one was amazed when the next day the Cardinal arrived, and told his grand nieces and the Lady of Glenuskie that he had arranged that they should go forward under the escort of the Earl and Countess of Suffolk, who were to start immediately for Nanci, there to espouse and bring home the King's bride, the Lady Margaret. There was reason to think that the French Royal Family would be present on the occasion, as the Queen of France was sister to King René of Sicily and Jerusalem, and thus the opportunity of joining their sister was not to be missed by the two Scottish maidens. The Cardinal added that he had undertaken, and made Sir Patrick Drummond understand, that he would be at all charges for his nieces, and further said that merchants with women's gear would presently be sent in, when they were to fit themselves out as befitted their rank for appearance at the wedding. At a sign from him a large bag, jingling heavily, was laid on the table by a clerk in attendance. There was nothing to be done but to make a low reverence and return thanks.

Jean had it in her to break out with ironical hopes that they would see something beyond the walls of a priory abroad, and not be ordered off the moment any one cast eyes on them; but my Lord of Winchester was not the man to be impertinent to, especially when bringing gifts as a kindly uncle, and when, moreover, King Henry had the bad taste to be more occupied with her sister than with herself.

It was Eleanor who chiefly felt a sort of repugnance to being thus, as it were, bought off or compensated for being sent out of reach. She could have found it in her heart to be offended at being thought likely to wish to steal the King's heart, and yet flattered by being, for the first time, considered as dangerous, even while her awe, alike of Henry's holiness and of those strange visions that had haunted her, made her feel it a relief that her lot was not to be cast with him.

The Cardinal did not seem to wish to prolong the interview with his grand nieces, having perhaps a certain consciousness of injury towards them; and, after assuring brilliant marriages for them, and graciously blessing them, he bade them farewell, saying that the Lady of Suffolk would come and arrange with them for the journey. No doubt, though, he might have been glad to place a niece on the throne; it would have been fatal to the peace he so much desired, for Henry to break his pledges to so near a kinswoman of the King of France. And when the bag was opened, and the rouleaux of gold and silver crowns displayed, his liberality contradicted the current stories of his avarice.

And by-and-by arrived a succession of merchants bringing horned hoods, transparent veils, like wings, supported on wire projections, long-trained dresses of silk and sendal, costly stomachers, bands of velvet, buckles set with precious stones, chains of gold and silver—all the fashions, in fact, enough to turn the head of any young lady, and in which the staid Lady Prioress seemed to take quite as much interest as if she had been to wear them herself—indeed, she asked leave to send Sister Mabel to fetch a selection of the older nuns given to needlework and embroidery to enjoy the exhibition, though it was to be carefully kept out of sight of the younger ones, and especially of the novices.

The excitement was enough to put the Cardinal's offences out of mind, while the delightful fitting and trying on occupied the maidens, who looked at themselves in the little hand mirrors held up to them by the admiring nuns, and demanded every one's opinion. Jean insisted that Annis should have her share, and Eleanor joined in urging it, when Dame Lilias shook her head, and said that was not the use the Lord Cardinal intended for his gold.

'He gave it to us to do as we would with it,' argued Eleanor.

'And she is our maiden, and it befits us not that she should look like ane scrub,' added Jean, in the words used by her brother's descendant, a century later.

'I thank you, noble cousins,' replied Annis, with a little haughtiness, 'but Davie would never thole to see me pranking it out of English gold.'

'She is right, Jeanie,' cried Eleanor. 'We will make her braw with what we bought at York with gude Scottish gold.'

'All the more just,' added Jean, 'that she helped us in our need with her ain.'

'And we are sib—near cousins after a',' added Eleanor; 'so we may well give and take.'

So it was settled, and all was amicable, except that there was a slight contest between the sisters whether they should dress alike, as Eleanor wished, while Jean had eyes and instinct enough to see that the colours and forms that set her fair complexion and flaxen tresses off to perfection, were damaging to Eelen's freckles and general auburn colouring. Hitherto, the sisters had worn only what they could get, happy if they could call it ornamental, and the power of choice was a novelty to them. At last the decision fell to the one who cared most about it, namely Jean. Eelen left her to settle for both, being, after the first dazzling display, only eager to get back again to Saint Marie Maudelin before the King should reclaim it.

There was something in the legend, wild and apocryphal as it is, together with what she had seen of the King, that left a deep impression upon her.

'And by these things ye understand maun
  The three best things which this Mary chose,
As outward penance and inward contemplation,
  And upward bliss that never shall cease,
Of which God said withouten bees
  That the best part to her chose Mary,
Which ever shall endure and never decrease,
  But with her abideth eternally.'

Stiff, quaint and awkward sounds old Bokenham's translation of the 'Golden Legend,' but to Eleanor it had much power. The whole history was new to her, after her life in Scotland, where information had been slow to reach her, and books had been few. The gewgaws spread out before Jean were to her like the gloves, jewels and braiding of hair with which Martha reproached her sister in the days of her vanity, and the cloister with its calm services might well seem to her like the better part. These nuns indeed did not strike her as models of devotion, and there was something in the Prioress's easy way of declaring that being safe there might prevent any need of special heed, which rung false on her ear; and then she thought of King Henry, whose rapt countenance had so much struck her, turning aside from enjoyment to seclude himself at the first hint that his pleasure might be a temptation. She recollected too what Lady Drummond had told her of Father Malcolm and Mother Clare, and how each had renounced the world, which had so much to offer them, and chosen the better part! She remembered Father Malcolm's sweet smile and kind words, and Mother Clare's face had impressed her deeply with its lofty peace and sweetness. How much better than all these agitations about princely bridegrooms! and broken lances and queens of beauty seemed to fade into insignificance, or to be only incidents in the tumult of secular life, and worldly struggle, and her spirit quailed at the anticipation of the journey she had once desired, the gay court with its follies, empty show, temptations, coarsenesses and cruelties, and the strange land with its new language. The alternative seemed to her from 'Maudelin' in her worldly days, to Maudelin at the Saviour's feet, and had Mother Margaret Stafford been one whit more the ideal nun perhaps, every one would have been perplexed by a vehement request to seclude herself at once in the cloister of St. Helen's.

Looking up, she saw a figure slowly pacing the turf walk. It was the Mother Clare, who had come to see the Lady of Glenuskie; but finding all so deeply engaged, had gone out to await her in the garden. Much indeed had Dame Lilias longed to join her friend, and make the most of these precious hours, but as purse-bearer and adviser to her Lady Joanna, it was impossible to leave her till the arrangements with the merchants were over. And the nuns of St. Helen's did not, as has already been seen, think much of an uncloistered sister. In her twenty years' toils among the poor, it had been pretty well forgotten that Mother Clare was Esclairmonde de Luxembourg, almost of princely rank, so that no one took the trouble to entertain her, and she had slipped out almost unperceived to the quiet garden with its grass walks. And there Eleanor came up to her, and with glistening tears, on a sudden impulse exclaimed, 'O holy mother, keep me with you, tell me to choose the better part.'

'You, lady? What is this?'

'Not lady, daughter—help me! I kenned it not before—but all is vanity, turmoil, false show, except the sitting at the Lord's feet.'

'Most true, my child. Ah! have I not felt the same? But we must wait His time.'

'It was I—it was I,' continued Eleanor, 'who set Jean upon this journey, leaving my brother and Mary and the bairns. And the further we go the more there is of vain show, and plotting and scheming, and I am weary and heartsick and homesick of it all, and shall grow worse and worse. Oh! shelter me here, in your good and holy house, dear reverend mother, and maybe I could learn to do the holy work you do, in my own country.'

How well Esclairmonde knew it all, and what aspirations had been hers! She took Eelen's hand kindly and said, 'Dear maid, I can only aid you by words! I could not keep you here. Your uncle the Cardinal would not suffer you to abide here, nor can I take sisters save by consent of the Queen, and now we have no Queen, of the King, and——'

'Oh no, I could not ask that,' said Eleanor, a deep blush mounting, as she remembered what construction might be put on her desire to remain in the King's neighbourhood. 'Ah! then must I go on—on—on further from home to that Court which they say is full of sin and evil and vanity? What will become of me?'

'If the religious life be good for you, trust me, the way will open, however unlikely it may seem. If not, heaven and the saints will show what your course should be.'

'But can there be such safety and holiness, save in that higher path?' demanded Eleanor.

'Nay, look at your own kinswoman, Dame Lilias—look at the Lady of Salisbury, are not these godly faithful women serving God through their duty to man—husband, children, all around? And are the longings and temptations to worldly thoughts and pleasures of the flesh so wholly put away in the cloister?'

'Not here,' began Eleanor, but Mother Clare hushed her.

'Verily, my child,' she added, 'you must go on with your sister on this journey, trusting to the care and guidance of so good a woman as my beloved old friend, Dame Lilias; and if you say your prayers with all your heart to be guarded from sin and temptation, and led into the path that is fittest for you, trust that our blessed Master and our Lady will lead you. Have you the Pater Noster in the vulgar tongue?' she added.

'We—we had it once ere my father's death. And Father Malcolm taught us, but we have since been so cast about that—that—I have forgotten.'

'Ah! Father Malcolm taught you,' and Esclairmonde took the girl's hand. 'You know how much I owe to Father Malcolm,' she softly added, as she led the maiden to a carved rood at the end of the cloister, and, before it, repeated the vernacular version of the Lord's Prayer till Eleanor knew it perfectly, and promised to follow up her 'Pater Nosters' with it.

And from that time there certainly was a different tone and spirit in Eleanor.

David, urged by his father, who still publicly ignored the young Douglas, persuaded him to write to his father now that there could be no longer any danger of pursuit; and the messenger Sir Patrick was sending to the King would afford the last opportunity. George growled and groaned a good deal, but perhaps Father Romuald pressed the duty on him in confession, for in his great relief at his lady's going off unplighted from London, he consented to indite, in the chamber Father Romuald shared with two of the Cardinal's chaplains, in a crooked and crabbed calligraphy and language much more resembling Anglo Saxon than modern English, a letter to the most high and mighty, the Yerl of Angus, 'these presents.'

But when he was entreated to assume his right position in the troop, he refused. 'Na, na, Davie,' he said, 'gin my father chooses to send me gear and following 'tis all very weel, but 'tisna for the credit of Scotland nor of Angus, that the Master should be ganging about like a land louper, with a single laddie after him—still less that he should be beholden to the Drummonds.'

'Ye would win to the speech of the lassie,' suggested David, 'gin that be what ye want!'

'Na kenning me, she willna look at me. Wait till I do that which may gar her look at me,' said the chivalrous youth.

He was not entirely without means, for the links of a gold chain which he had brought from home went a good way in exchange, and though he had spoken of being at his own charges, he had found himself compelled to live as one of the train of the Princesses, who were treated as the guests first of the Duke of York, then of the Cardinal, who had given Sir Patrick a sum sufficient to defray all possible expenses as far as Bourges, besides having arranged with Suffolk for those of the journey.

(To be continued.)

A STORM IN A TEA-CUP.

BY SELINA GAYE.

XII.

THE THIRD TIME.

Cousin Hester was growing seriously uneasy about Dulcie, who looked whiter and whiter, and ate and talked less and less, each day; but it was difficult to know what to do for her, as she still called herself quite well and was evidently only anxious to avoid notice.

Then there was Madame Aubert's story about her being lost for half an hour in the town and walking back with some friend! That would have been nothing in itself, for Madame Aubert might easily have been mistaken, but it was odd that Judy too should have taken up the notion that Dulcie had a 'friend' in Dinan, and it was odd also that no one should have mentioned the adventure but Madame Aubert. To be sure Fando was not with them, and Judy might feel that any communication on the subject would not come particularly well from her just then; and Marie might think that she herself would not be held guiltless, and would not therefore accuse herself by making apologies.

Had she heard of it sooner Cousin Hester thought that she might have inquired a little more closely; but she had not chanced to go into the grocer's shop for several days, and then it seemed better to let the matter rest. It did not seem in the least probable that Dulcie should have picked up an acquaintance at Dinan, unknown to Aunt Mary, whom she was afraid or ashamed to acknowledge; indeed, the idea seemed altogether ridiculous considering how slow she was to make acquaintance at all; besides, she could not have had any opportunity, for Aunt Mary was much too careful to let her go about by herself.

And yet, Cousin Hester felt uncomfortable and could not get rid of the impression that there was some sort of mystery; though at the same time she was annoyed with herself for being suspicious. In any case, however, it could hardly be the adventure in the town which was affecting Dulcie's spirits now, for she had been particularly bright the week after; and the change had not begun, so Fando said, until the day of the Emperor's fête. Well, chills did sometimes hang about people for a long time, and they were depressing, so perhaps it was only that; unless, indeed, she had been frightened by this revival of the story of the *dame blanche*, and was ashamed to say so. She certainly avoided the subject as far as she could by the shortest of answers, and there was an impression among the servants that she had seen—*something*, the evening that she was hiding with Marie and Willie. It might be owing to Willie's imperfect French and his own fright, probably it was; and if she were not nervous she would be offended at being asked, so that on the whole Cousin Hester felt as if it would be better to take it for granted that she was above any foolish fears of the sort.

Still, it was not satisfactory altogether, and the most unsatisfactory part about it was that Judy should so decidedly have made up her mind that Dulcie was not straightforward, as she had by Fando's account. Fando herself, however, was of opinion that she was perfectly true and only shy, and indeed declared that she liked her better the more she saw of her; for she was very interesting to talk to, when she would, or could talk, and sometimes, when they were alone she had a great deal to say.

'And she *is* fond of you, Cousin Hester, though perhaps you wouldn't guess it; she would dress dolls, and make clothes, and do anything for you!'

'Would she? Well, I have not done much for her, poor child, and the worst of it is that I don't seem able; and I must say I should not have guessed that she was fond of me at all.'

'No,' said Fando laughing a little, 'she reminds me of the little girl who wrote to her greatest friend, one that she really cared for very much indeed, and she began only "Dear Annie" and ended "yours sincerely," without any idea that it sounded cold and stiff. The words meant a great deal to her, for she thought you couldn't be anything better than sincere, and that is just Dulcie.'

'I am very glad you think it is; but I do wish I could get at her a little!'

'She likes to help you. She has been working quite hard at those things for Perrine before she gets up in the morning.'

'Has she really? Did she tell you?'

'Oh! no, I found it out! She had done so much, and I could not make out when, so I guessed, and she was obliged to own it; but she did not want you to know, of course. And, Cousin Hester,' Fando went on with some amusement, 'she is *so* sorry for you!'

'Sorry for me! why?'

'I can't think! It slipped out unawares, I suppose, one day; and when I asked what in the world she meant, she only muttered something about my knowing soon enough, and I couldn't get her to say any more; but I have seen her look at you sometimes, as if she pitied you very much!'

'What can she have got in her head! Really, the air seems full of mysteries just now, and I do so hate them! I am glad you are not a mysterious person, Fando. Well, I suppose we must just go on patiently, and hope that she will learn to trust us in time; she improved very much for a while. I will wait over your birthday to-morrow, and then, if she does not seem better, I really must have a doctor, whether she likes it or not. Perhaps if you were to tell her so, she would be inclined to confide in you.'

'Perhaps she would, for she does so hate a fuss!'

Fando's birthday was an event much looked forward to by the children, for Cousin Hester always contrived something pleasant by way of 'keeping' it, and this year they were to go for a picnic up the river; and Mademoiselle, a very good-natured person, whom they were all fond of, had been asked to go too.

There had been a great wrapping up of little parcels the night before, and Fando's plate was piled with small presents, including a small but valuable collection of acorns and chestnuts from Willie, and a beautiful paint-box from Uncle Russell.

'But she is not to take it with her to-day, is she, Cousin Hester?' said Judy, appealingly, when it had been duly admired all round; 'because when she and Dulcie get stuck down to draw they are so very unconcerned, and no good to anybody.'

'I didn't mean to take it; we are only going to look to-day, and settle what to draw another time.'

'I wonder whether we ever could do a sketch of Dinan,' Fando was saying, as they stood waiting for the boat a few hours later.

It was one of the finest days that they had had for a long time, and Dinan was looking her very best for the occasion. In front sparkled the blue Rance, crossed at a little distance by the old, dark wooden bridge, stained with moss and lichen, and making beautiful reflections and shadows in the water; farther down was the plain, clean, new viaduct, with its massive grey arches, and to the right were two or three steep-roofed picturesque houses, beyond and above which rose the granite hill on which the town is built, with the bright sunshine lighting up the old walls, gilding the spire of the cathedral on the extreme summit, and glancing upon the tops of the trees which filled up the whole space not occupied by roofs and walls and rocks.

'It would make such a pretty picture, if one only could!' sighed Fando.

'I wouldn't be tempted, at least at present, Fando,' said Uncle Russell. 'Experienced artists avoid panoramas as a rule, I believe; but you will manage it some day, if you go on as you are doing, and Dulcie too; and I hope you will both have many more opportunities, if you don't get tired of coming to Plancöet.'

'That I am sure I never shall!' said Fando; 'and you won't either, will you, Dulcie?'

'Oh, no, not *tired!*' said Dulcie, with an involuntary emphasis which surprised Fando, and made herself colour uncomfortably.

A few minutes more and they were in the boat, gliding under the old bridge and the viaduct, and then past bold masses of red and grey rock which stood out from among the foliage with which the banks of the river were covered. Jack and Judy were keeping keenly watchful eyes upon the oars, and were wondering how soon they might offer to take the place of the two rowers; but no sooner had they got clear of the bridge and clear of the other boats, than one of the men leapt on shore, and, harnessing himself with a rope, proceeded to tow them smoothly and quickly along through a succession of hills and dales, all too thickly wooded to allow any view of the country beyond. But it was not the less pleasant for that, and presently, when one of the river's many sudden bends brought them into a quiet spot, so shut in by trees that it was almost like a lake, the men stopped for a while to rest and refresh themselves with their cider, and for a full minute there was no sound to be heard but the gentle plash of the river against the boat, and the hum of the blue dragon-flies as they flashed to and fro.

But the next moment Judy was exclaiming, 'Oh, there are some water-lilies!' And she pointed to a little island of broad green leaves and white and gold blossoms. 'Why shouldn't we take some home for the pond? It would be so nice to have them growing there.'

'All among the duck-weed! Wouldn't it be rather cruel to take them from this clear water?'

'I don't believe they would mind, and they would look lovely; and you might have a bud to put in your hair, Cousin Hester.'

'Well, we will see as we come back, if you don't forget. You see, they would be decidedly wet, and I don't know where we could put them now; but there will be more room in the hamper by-and-by, and I should think that the longer they are left in the water the better.' With which answer Judy was obliged to be content for the time; but water-lilies she was bent upon having if she could anyhow manage it, and when she had set her mind upon a thing there was not much chance of her forgetting.

At Léhon everybody got out to look at the old Abbey with its unroofed cloisters, the monastery turned into a woollen manufactory, and the convent church an utter ruin, knee-deep in nettles, with bright wild pinks and valerian growing out of the parapet.

In former times, so Mademoiselle said, there was a very odd custom connected with this abbey. On Monday in Whitsun week, the newly-married couples in the parish had to come on horseback and break a lance against the monastery shield. This was called *courir la quintaine.* Then they dismounted, and the husband took his wife's hand and led her up to the Prior, when she made a profound curtsey, and sang these words—

'Si je suis mariée, vous le savez bien;
Si je suis à malaise, vous n'en saurez rien:
Ma chanson est dite, je ne vous dois plus rien.'

In the village church close by were a number of distaffs, carefully tied up and decorated with ribbons, which puzzled them much until Mademoiselle explained that they were given out on Sunday to the village girls, who took it in turns to spin off the flax and bring them back ready filled the Sunday following, the thread being sold for the support of the church.

But they had not much time to give to Léhon that day, and after noticing the many long boxes full of eggs which were waiting on the river-bank *en route* for London, they re-entered the boat, and were soon gliding up the river again to the spot where they were to picnic, which they reached without any excitement or adventure, so that there is not much to be said about it, though it had been, as Mademoiselle said, a most delightful 'promenade.' Perhaps, on the whole, however, some of the most delightful days in one's life are those which have been most comfortably free from adventures!

At all events, Judy nearly had a disagreeable one on the way home, in her benevolent desire to rescue a couple of handkerchiefs which had floated away from some women who were busy washing on the bank; but she was nothing daunted, and when they reached the 'lake' again, renewed her petition for the water-lilies, which one of the men at last fished up for her.

However, the day was not destined to end without a more serious adventure, or what seemed so at the time, to one of the party; and none of them are ever likely to forget the water-lilies they brought home on Fando's birthday, and what came of them.

The tired ones of the party had jogged home with the hamper in the donkey cart, and after a late tea, the 'boys' had wandered off into the garden, and Dulcie, who had undertaken to unpack the lilies and put them safely in a bucket of water for the night, was in the entry attending to them, when she heard a sound of singing at some little distance.

It was nothing unusual, for when people use your drive almost as if it were a public way, you naturally grow used to seeing and hearing strangers, and for a moment Dulcie took no notice; but, as the sound came nearer, and she recognised the song and the thin, quavering voice, she started to her feet. She was safe in the house, she did *not* believe in Korrigans, or tall white fairies; should she stand her ground boldly, and see who it really was? It would be so silly to find that she had been running away from nothing more terrible than an old woman in a white cap and apron, after all.

And she went to the open door, and stood peering out into the twilight, just long enough to see a figure, a tall white figure, gliding up the avenue. Head and face she could not distinguish, but if ever she saw a white dress in her life, this, coming slowly, wearily towards her, was certainly one.

Dulcie gazed for a few seconds half fascinated; and then her courage forsook her, and before the figure had emerged from the avenue, she was dashing upstairs to her room.

It did not take very long, and yet, when she looked out of the window, as she made herself do almost at once, there was nothing whatever to be seen, and no sound to be heard but the distant voices of the boys, and the hooting of the owls, which were beginning their nightly concert in the tower. Whoever it might have been had disappeared as quickly as she had done the first time, and yet she seemed to be moving so slowly that she could not possibly have got across the court in the time. Perhaps she had gone into the tower, the door of which was open; but Victorine was there ironing, with Pauline for company, and they would have screamed if they had seen her. Perhaps they *couldn't* see her though, that was possible! People don't all see alike.

And then it suddenly occurred to Dulcie that she had left the hamper, and the bucket with the water-lilies, just in the middle of the entry for any one to tumble over! She *must* go down and move them, or somebody might be hurt; and she felt her way down the winding stairs, arriving only just in time to prevent a catastrophe, as Judy came rushing in, followed by the two boys in full chase, and in another moment there would have been a general upset. As it was, Judy caught herself up only just in time, thanks to Dulcie's hurried warning.

'Well, that *was* nice!' said she, rubbing her ankle, which had had an involuntary kick from one of her pursuers. 'Now if *I* had gone away and left things about to break people's necks and legs, I should have been rectified by everybody! What *have* you been doing? I don't *see* much.'

'It's the unseenly things that take longer than the seenly things, don't they, Dulcimer?' said Alick, without any intention of making unpleasant allusions, though to Dulcie it sounded as if he had seen her flight and known what occasioned it.

'Well, it seems to me it's all unseenly together, here in the dark, and the sooner that bucket goes out of the way under the table the less chance there will be of somebody's having to buy a wooden leg to-morrow morning,' said Judy.

'Shall I move it then?'

'Oh, dear, no!—not if it will go by itself certainly. You just try what speaking civilly to it will do first, Jack. It's wasteful to do more than you need, you know.'

'I say, Dulcibella,' Judy went on, with a mischievous twinkle in her eye, as they went into the lighted drawing-room and stood about for a minute or two, waiting for Cousin Hester before they settled down to work, books, or games, 'you haven't got the creeps to-night, have you?'

'Why should I?'

'I am sure I don't know, unless you caught them in the entry, for you haven't been playing hide and seek to-night anyhow, unless it was with yourself; but the stones *are* cold, and I suppose you ran upstairs to get warm.'

No answer, and there was a minute's silence, and then Alick said solemnly, 'Silence in the pig-market, and let the old sow speak first!'

'You are a rude little boy!' said Judy loftily, but incautiously, thereby bringing down upon herself a shout of 'You spoke first!'

'Of course I did,' she retorted, 'if I didn't, who would? There's nothing but grunts to be expected from pigs, and *you* called it the pig-market, you know! I say, Bella,' she went on, having silenced the boys for the time, 'Dowsabel! which do you like best, cherries or plums?'

'She likes them as well as each other; don't you, Dulcimer?' put in Alick.

'No, she doesn't! I guessed plums the very first night she came, and I told Fando so; and I was quite right, wasn't I, Dulcie?'

'I'm sure I don't know, and I don't care!'

'Don't know! Then it's plums! You *would* have known if it had been cherries! Well then, do you like crust or crumb?'

'I don't know what you mean.'

'Dear me! don't you? Have you quarrelled with your bread and butter quite entirely, then? Here's Fando, she knows! I say, Fando, which is the best, crust or crumb?'

'Judy! I thought you had given up that silly nonsense.'

'And there isn't any best out of two things!' said Jack.

'That there is, out of school!'

'Plum and crumb rhyme to dumb and glum and mum!' whispered Alick in an undertone, but loud enough to be heard.

'We all know that, Alick, thank you; it's a very poor joke, and you picked it up from Judy!'

'There! now Fando is going to turn crusty, and we had better all take care!'

'Yes, you had! and I advise you to go and look at Nanon, Judy; I don't believe you have been near her all day,' said Fando, with a good deal of meaning in her tone. And Judy for a time subsided.

XIII.

WATER-LILIES.

It was Mademoiselle's morning, and Jack and Alick had been safely consigned to the tower. Fando had birthday-letters to answer, and said that she should be busy all the morning, and Dulcie was very much inclined to stay indoors with her, for her head was aching a good deal; but she did not want Judy to fancy that she was cross, and still less did she want Cousin Hester to make inquiries as to how she had slept, etc., so she made no difficulty when the former proposed that they should first go and plant the water-lilies, and then help

Françoise in the garden, where there were plenty of apples to pick up, to say nothing of weeds, which had grown apace during the showery weather.

Willie of course chose to come too, though he was given to understand that he was to 'assist,' in the first part of the proceedings at all events, strictly and solely in the French sense of the word.

'First we must clear away some of this horrid duck-weed, and then put them far enough from the edge, or that old Thérèse will come and root them up and give them to her ducks most likely! They look nice and fresh, don't they? I wish we could get into the boat, but Cousin Hester said we mustn't, because Jean-Baptiste says it's leaky, stupid boy! I don't believe it is, and it would be so much easier, but we shall have to do with the steps, and we must scriggle and screw through the bushes to get to them. It isn't worth while to go through the kitchen and round by the path. I can't think why they were put in such a stupid place! You stay in the drive, Willie, there isn't room here, and you'll see better!'

Judy pushed her way unceremoniously through the shrubs, followed by Dulcie, and presently they emerged on the bank, in a rather dishevelled condition, and began clearing away the duck-weed with their rakes, standing on the lower one of the two wooden steps, and reaching out as far as they could.

It took some little time, for there was not too much standing room, and it was necessary to proceed cautiously, and then, too, the weed would keep closing up again almost as fast as they pushed and pulled it away; but at last there was a tolerably clear space, and Judy dropped one of the roots into the water with a stone fastened to it to keep it down.

'But supposing the pond should be deeper than the river, I wonder what will happen then! They will be dragged under and drowned I suppose, poor things! and it is pretty deep in some places. I wonder whether water-lilies grow up from the bottom or down from the top. Get away, Rip, we don't want any little dogs fussing here. Now, look here, your arms are the longest, will you push it with the rake just as far as ever you can stretch? I will hold you, and here is a good strong bough just handy if you want anything, and I can hold by this tree.'

Dulcie obediently did as she was directed and pushed away until she had got the water-lily nearly to the spot where Judy wished it to be. But, just as she was leaning over as far as she thought prudent, or perhaps even a little farther, the two dogs set up a great barking and scuffled off down the drive, and Uncle Russell's voice was heard saying, 'Good-morning, Mr. Beaumont! I am very glad to welcome you to Plancöet!'

'Why, Dulcie, it's *your friend!*'

But whether Dulcie heard the latter speech or not, it is impossible to say, for before the words were fairly off Judy's lips there was a crash and a splash! Dulcie's foot had slipped and she had disappeared into the pond head first, very nearly dragging Judy with her by the suddenness of the jerk.

It had all happened in such an instant that there was no telling with any certainty how it had come about, whether Judy had made some sudden involuntary movement in her excitement, or whether Dulcie had been startled at a critical moment, and so had overbalanced herself.

It was only for a moment, however, that she remained invisible, and in less time than it takes to write, she was on her feet again and struggling back to the steps, without her hat and with the water up to her shoulders, but still retaining sufficient presence of mind to refuse the hand which Judy held out to her.

'There's the rake then. Oh! you do look so funny! You cling on to that, and I'll pull.'

'Out of the way, Judy, or you'll be in yourself,' cried Uncle Russell, in a peremptory tone. 'Dulcie, don't move till I come to you, you are quite safe if you stand still.'

But Mr. Beaumont was the younger and more active of the two, and before Uncle Russell had fought his way through the shrubs he was on the bank, and with some little difficulty had succeeded in pulling Dulcie up on the steps, where she stood, a deplorable-looking object, streaked from head to foot with duck-weed, and dripping, streaming, wet.

'Miss Dulcie!' That one exclamation of utter surprise he could not, or did not, suppress as he recognised her; but then he went on, 'Can you walk? You ought to get into the house as quickly as possible.'

'Yes, yes, of course. My dear child, what a state you are in, I must carry you.'

'Oh no! indeed I can walk, I shall make you in such a dreadful mess,' said Dulcie feebly, looking down at her soaking, clinging garments with intense disgust.

'Nonsense! Here, Judy, you run along and find Hester or somebody. Quick, round to the kitchen, and say I'm coming!'

And Judy scudded away along the top of the bank, while Uncle Russell picked Dulcie up as if she had been a baby, and marched off with a hasty apology to his visitor.

And so this was M. de Beaumont-Plancöet's first introduction to the home of his ancestors'—certainly not what either he or Dulcie had pictured, even in their most imaginative moments.

Of course we all know that things have a most perverse way of not turning out as one expects, but this was a little too bewildering. Had that little chit of a schoolgirl been laughing at him in her sleeve then all the time, while she professed to be so sympathetic?

In his very early days, having no sisters to teach him better, Master Henri had been overheard declaring in his ignorance that 'little girls were *horwid!* little girls *scwatched!*' and if ever he had been disposed to repeat the speech, since he had arrived at years of discretion, it was on the present occasion.

'Cousin Hester—oh! then it was "Cousin Hester" whom I met at the Mairie! I felt sure I had heard her voice before.'

But any satisfaction that he might have got out of the discovery of the excellence of his memory for voices, was speedily dashed by the very mortifying remembrance of the way in which he had talked to Dulcie during their walk from Vicomté, and the reflection, more mortifying still, that no doubt every word of it had been faithfully retailed.

'What an ass they must think me,' he muttered ruefully, as he sauntered up to the front door, where he was met by Judy.

'Oh! I was just coming to look for you,' was her greeting. 'Uncle Russell says, will you please excuse him? He will be as quick as ever he can, but he *is* so wet, and he wants to know whether you are not wet too, and if you are, will you go up to his room? Or, continued Judy hospitably, 'I'll fetch you a *torchon* out of the kitchen if you like, I know where they are,' and away she flew, returning in another moment with the cloth.

Judy had had a considerable fright, but she was a person who speedily recovered herself, and she was now burning with intense curiosity, for her ears had been quick to hear that Mr. Beaumont had called Dulcie by her name, and she wondered what Fando would say now, for she supposed that people didn't *generally* tell their christian names, or surnames either, to strangers when they asked the way.

'Thank you. And how is your cousin?' said Mr. Beaumont, as he rubbed his coat sleeves.

'She is very *wet*,' said Judy; 'but, she is up in her own room, and Cousin Hester is with her, and I am dispensed. How did you know that she was Dulcie? Did she tell you the other day in the town?'

'We were in the same hotel at Dinard for a little while. Didn't you know?'

'*Were* you?'

Judy was a good deal excited at this confirmation of her suspicions, and might have proceeded to further inquiries, but at that moment Uncle Russell appeared and her opportunity was gone, so she had to make the best of the one scrap of information which she had succeeded in gaining. To do her justice, it must be said that she was so really shocked at what she took for plain evidence of Dulcie's want of truth, that she had no inclination to betray her to Mr. Beaumont, though at the same time there *was* a certain satisfaction in being able to go to Fando and say, 'There, I told you so!'

And for the first moment Fando was staggered. She had begun to try and care for Dulcie in the beginning, because the others did not, but she had gone on to really care for her for her own sake; and she so thoroughly trusted her that Judy's announcement was a blow.

All that she said, however, was, 'There must be some mistake. We have no right to believe things of her behind her back, until we have asked her to explain.'

'Well, I don't see how she is going to get out of it, do you now? I'm glad I gave her back that ribbon she bought for Nanon! It was to wear the cross with; that day she got lost, you know, and then I saw her shake hands with this Mr. Beaumont! I told you I did, only you wouldn't believe me, but I suppose you will now. And she always said she hadn't any friend at all in Dinan.'

'Ah! Dulcie doesn't call everybody she knows a friend. Perhaps she mightn't call you a friend, though you have been in the same house, and yet I suppose if you were to meet any time in London she would shake hands with you.'

'But she said she did not even *know* an Englishman at Dinard besides Uncle John.'

'Well, perhaps Mr. Beaumont is not English for all you know!'

'His coat is English, and he speaks like an Englishman, and his name—well, that might be French of course. Dear me! supposing he is one of the old De Beaumonts that Antoine talks about! then *that's* what made them all talk about the *dame blanche*, I shouldn't wonder! and I suppose Dulcie knew all about it, and that's what made her get so red when I asked whether she knew who the portrait in her room was, don't you remember, the first day? Well, you may say what you like, but *I* call it haggling, to misguide anybody like that!'

'And I advise you to wait before you make up your mind, and I think you were very unkind about the ribbon. Do you know where Willie is?'

'He went up into the tower with Mademoiselle, and he says Mr. Beaumont is the gentleman who "cursèd" Cousin Hester at the cathedral the other day, but of course it was Dulcie! *Did* you see her when Uncle Russell carried her in? She made a stream all the way! and when he put her down there was a pool, as if she was melting away like Undine, only there was duck-weed all over her, in her hair and on her face! She did look so funny! Well, I suppose I shall have to get that pelican Jean-Baptiste to put the other root in, and I had better go and hunt him out before Mademoiselle comes over. Do you know what Nanon does? She tells him that she has got a *beautiful* piece of green velvet to make him a Sunday waistcoat, some that Cousin Hester has given her, but that he shan't have it! that is, not until he does *all* he ought to do *properly!*'

'Poor Jean-Baptiste! I hope he doesn't want a waistcoat in much of a hurry then! I wonder how Dulcie is now. I think Cousin Hester is going to have the doctor to her, for I know her head has been aching badly this week, off and on.'

Dulcie's head was aching badly still, and she felt ill all over; but she was in bed now, and had had a cup of some sort of herb-tea, or *tisane*, to drink, and everybody had been very kind, and though she felt restless and uneasy both in mind and body, and wondered now and then in a dim vague way what was going on, she was thankful to be safe upstairs out of the way.

She could not think much, but the last words which she had heard before her involuntary bath had not at all been washed out of her mind, quite the contrary. And though it had all happened in such a moment, it was the cordial tone in which Uncle Russell had spoken to Mr. Beaumont which had struck her with astonishment, as much as the words themselves, for it really seemed as if he had known him before, and instead of being terribly alarmed or angry, were actually pleased to see him! She seemed to be hearing them over and over again, and the more she thought the more she was puzzled by them, in a dim dull way. The morning passed between dozing and waking, she hardly knew how. Cousin Hester came in and out, *not* walking on tip-toes in a well-meant but irritating attempt to make no noise, but treading softly and steadily as usual, and she did not try to talk to her or even to ask her how she was, and whether she wanted anything, but seemed somehow to know it all by instinct.

Once she brought in the little French doctor, who looked at her and felt her pulse in the most polite way, and bowed a great many times, but it was all lost upon Dulcie, for she felt too dull and heavy to care, or even to be vexed at having to see him.

Then Fando looked in, and Dulcie roused herself to ask what they were all doing, and received the amazing intelligence that Mr. Beaumont was at that moment sitting at the front door, making a sketch of the owls' tower, that he had been very good-natured in showing her something in the perspective which she did not understand, that Uncle Russell had asked him to stay to luncheon, and that the boys had made friends with him, and he was going to take them for a walk in the afternoon, and Judy too, if Cousin Hester would let her. It was all very puzzling, much too puzzling for an aching head!

'Then he hasn't said anything yet!' Dulcie murmured, more to herself than Fando.

'About what, dear?'

'About Plancöet and turning them out!—it belongs to him you know—oh! I forgot you didn't know, *don't* tell! Perhaps something has happened and he has changed his mind. I hope he has! I wonder what made him. Has he seen the portraits? I suppose he will want to see the *dame blanche* there over the chimney-piece. This is the *third time*, and it has all come true.'

Dulcie had grown rather excited and talked confusedly, and Fando, judging that it would be best to leave her alone, went in search of Cousin Hester in some alarm, for it seemed to her that she must be gone quite crazy.

'I think M. Duclos thought she might be a little feverish,' said Cousin Hester, 'for of course it was a shock; and then I am certain that she has not been well for some days past, which makes it all the worse, and I can't help thinking that she has had something on her mind. Well, perhaps this will be the clearing shower!'

'But what *could* she have meant?'

'Indeed, I don't know! But to try and guess what anybody means who is confused and half asleep, is as hopeless as to try and interpret dreams, I should say. But I do hope that she has not been undergoing tortures about the *dame blanche* I would not have put her in that room with the portrait if I had had any idea of her being nervous, or of the servants getting up a panic; but of course I did not suppose that she had heard, or would hear anything about it, and yet it *seems* to have originated with her.'

'Mr. Beaumont must have told her, I suppose.'

'Only Aunt Mary has never mentioned him in her letters, and Dulcie was always with her; and if she knew that he had anything to do with Plancöet she would have said something about it, I feel sure. She would have offered him an introduction to my father, naturally. As it was we met quite by chance, as people say, at the ball the other night, and hearing his name my father asked whether he were any connection of the old family, and then found out all about him. I did not say anything of it, as I did not suppose that it would particularly interest any of you. I suppose, however, that the servants must have heard of him in the town, and so were ready to fancy anything.'

A little more light was thrown on the subject at luncheon, however, for Mr. Beaumont chanced to mention Dinard, and then Uncle Russell asked whether he had happened to see anything of his sister, Mrs. Trafford, and he explained the amount of their acquaintance, adding that of course he had not known of her interest in Plancöet at the time.

'I almost wonder that your name did not strike her, but of course there are many English Beaumonts; and if she did not know that you were coming on——'

'I may have mentioned Dinan, but nothing, as it happened, led to Plancöet.'

'But Dulcie knew, didn't she?' came in a demure voice from Judy, who had been listening with all her ears, and was now quick to notice that Mr. Beaumont looked anything but comfortable as he answered 'Yes.'

'Knew that you were coming here, and did not tell you that they were going to do the same? Mr. and Mrs. Trafford would have been here now but for a sudden summons to Paris. Well, that *is* being cautious,' said Uncle Russell, laughing, 'and she has not mentioned you to any of us; has she, Hester?'

'Did you tell her about the *dame blanche*, and tell her not to tell Aunt Mary?' inquired Judy.

'I told her, yes,' said Mr. Beaumont, looking a little hot, as he turned to Cousin Hester, adding, 'I hope I have not done any mischief? I had no idea that your cousin was coming here, and of course I made no secret of anything I said. We accidentally had rather a long walk together one day; the fact is, somehow or other she had managed to get separated from Mr. and Mrs. Trafford and left behind at St. Malo. I undertook to see her back to Dinard, and in the course of the walk we were talking about Duguesclin and Dinan, and so on, and that led to my speaking of Plancöet.'

'Of course. Why not? But I wonder that Dulcie should not have told Mrs. Trafford, when she must have known that she would be interested. I suppose she is of opinion that silence is golden; at all events she will never be a mischief-maker! Well, if you are kind enough to take those scamps out, perhaps you would like to be off.'

To Judy's great disgust, however, her walk and Willie's was to be with Marie, and without Fando, who was going to sit in Dulcie's room for a while to set Cousin Hester free. To be sure they could and did take the donkeys; and many a time before Judy had found it sufficiently pleasant, but to-day things would not go right, and when the boys returned full of their expedition, matters came to a sudden and serious crisis.

Fando was in the music-room when Judy dashed in upon her, with her face scarlet, her apron torn from top to bottom, and sundry other tokens of recent warfare about her.

'It's a shame!' she cried, 'it's a wicked, mean shame, and Jack ought to be thrashed! I won't hush, and I don't care if Cousin Hester does hear me, or Uncle Russell, either! I wish they would; and as for Willie, he's a horrid little rattletrap!'

'Well, what *is* it? What have they done?'

'Oh, of course you'll stand up for Jack and Willie, but you wouldn't like it, if they did it to you! Well, then, Willie went sneaking up to them this morning and said I pushed Dulcie in; and it is a story—an utter, big story! And Dulcie would say so too, if she knew, and I believe it was her conscience pushed her in, because she was ashamed to see Mr. Beaumont, she jumped so, and she very nearly dragged me in after her! But Jack believes Willie, and Alick does nothing but laugh, and its too—too bad!'

'Yes, so it is; it's very naughty of them,' said Fando soothingly, as Judy dissolved into passionate tears. 'I'll talk to Willie about it, but you know he is very little and doesn't understand; and if you were holding Dulcie's frock, very likely he thought you pushed her, by accident; it might have looked like it to him.'

'He didn't *say* by accident, and I didn't push her at all! And Jack says I did it on purpose, and he has no business to.'

'No, he hasn't of course. But, Judy, dear, I do wish you would give up flying at him. Cousin Hester will be so shocked to see another apron spoilt; but really you know, when you get both your hands in his hair you can hardly expect him to stand still like a lamb and not try to get away, can you?'

'It's very wicked of him to say such things!'

'It would be very wicked indeed, if he really meant it, but of course he was only teasing. It is not a right thing to tease about, but they all know that you don't like Dulcie, and I suppose that put it into their heads. You know you have teased *her* dreadfully sometimes!'

'I've never pushed her, or hurt her.'

'I don't know about the hurting. Words hurt people quite as much as pushes sometimes, I think; and you know, you hurt Nanon by accident, but it was because you were teasing, and they might have thought——'

'No, they mightn't! They know I never tease Dulcie like that, but they'll go and make Cousin Hester think I did,' said Judy, still tearful, but less angry.

'No, they won't. Cousin Hester never believes anything bad of people until she is obliged, and she wouldn't think of listening to anything so dreadful. Besides, they would never dream of saying such a thing seriously, of course they wouldn't! Come, let me bathe your eyes and smooth your hair if I can. I don't want Cousin Hester to be worried any more than we can help, for she is quite anxious enough already.'

'Anxious! what about?'

'Why, Dulcie; she is afraid that she may be *very* ill.'

'*Is* she? just from tumbling into the pond? Why, it's only like having a bath.'

'Well, she *is* ill, and if I were you I wouldn't say anything more about Dulcie's conscience, because you don't know anything, and you might be sorry—afterwards.'

'She isn't going to *die*, is she?'

'Oh! no, I hope not, but if she were only very ill, you would be sorry, wouldn't you?'

But Judy made no reply, for she was a good deal startled.

(*To be continued.*)

THE DUKE'S RANGER.

PART I.

An elderly man sat gloomy and silent at the door of a neat forest lodge standing in the midst of the stretch of woodland between Altenburg and Windisch.

Moodily he looked up at the sky darkened by heavy black clouds, and every now and then a dull shot or a trumpeter's signal broke the stillness of the early night. Sometimes, when he turned a little aside, he could also see flames and columns of lurid smoke lighting up the dusky expanse to the west of him.

Then he shook his head and muttered imprecations on the lawless Imperialist troops, who, German soldiers though they were, behaved in German lands worse than Infidels could have done.

That same day they had taken Altenburg, which belonged to the Protestant Duke of Saxony; and though luckily orders arrived for them to march against the Swedish King, who, during that distracted period when the Protestant faith asserted itself, was its bravest champion, they had found time to waste and devastate all outlying farms and homesteads.

'Curses on them, renegades that they are,' murmured the old man, whose name was Shilder, and who was the Duke's chief ranger. For more than thirty years he had lived in the forest, but though his hair was grey and his shoulders bent, he was by no means an old man as yet.

His Grace valued him highly as one of his most faithful retainers; and the keepers were attached to him though he was a strict master. His knowledge in all matters relating to woodcraft was unsurpassed and much thought of by all, although his knowledge of other matters was only spoken of with bated breath.

The Ranger's room was cheerful and well-kept; for, bare though walls and floors might be, both were as clean as whitewash and scouring could make them. His only daughter, Bertha, insisted on having the boards scrubbed every morning, and herself strewed sand on them in fanciful designs. When, on one occasion, troopers had been seen in the home-wood, and the whimpering maid had shown signs of fearsome restiveness, Bertha, true Saxon as she was, had threatened to empty the bucket over her shoulders unless she went on scouring as usual.

'Not even the Imperialists, if ever they came,' she declared, 'should be able to say that the ranger's daughter lived in a dirty chamber.'

The dark oaken table before which her father was sitting, the high-backed chair, the settles, the copper candlesticks on the table, and the dishes and platters on the dresser, even the large Bible on the window-sill, all had been dusted and well rubbed by her own hands.

Breathing a deep sigh of contentment, she stepped up to her father, who looked at her with loving pride. And well he might be proud of her, there was not a prettier girl in all Altenburg.

Her full tall figure was well set off by a light green linsey gown, on account of her recent active occupations still drawn up through the pocket-hole, thus bringing into view slim ankles and well-shaped feet, clad in green hose with red clocks and buckled shoes. The gown went up high to the neck, and had a lace ruffle, but the sleeves were short, showing the beautifully rounded arms. A crimson ribbon bound the fair hair which hung down her back in two long plaits, and the light shining on their golden ripples seemed to make these plaits dance at each movement of the lithe active figure. Her blue eyes had deep lights like precious stones, and whenever she laughed, which was very often, two charming dimples appeared in her cheeks.

She was not in the least like her father, for his make was slim, almost delicate, his complexion dark with brown eyes, and he was grave of countenance. He wore a green doublet, dark leather breeches and shoes, a flat broad cap as head covering, and on account of the troublous times, he had a short dagger in his belt, and though he was in his own house, also a loaded gun was leaning against his chair.

'Well, lass, I suppose thou art fairly tired out with all thy work and cleaning?' he said.

She passed her white apron across her face before she answered.

'Not so bad as all that, father, but now I'll fetch you a jug of ale; and I suppose I may also draw one for the men outside?'

She was alluding to the keepers, who had been obliged to mount guard in case the Imperialists should attack the lonely house; the dogs also had been let out and completed a contingent of defence by no means despicable.

'Yes, lassie, take them a jug full, and mind you don't forget Conrad,' added the Ranger, jokingly.

But though he might joke to please his daughter, he looked sad as always.

Bertha laughed merrily and went her way. The Ranger stepped to the window, opened one of the small panes set in lead, and listened out into the night both with ears and eyes as if he were out in the woods tracking a deer.

'They are not coming this way,' he muttered; 'we can go on to-morrow in our usual way. Then I may as well lock away the chest.'

Saying this, he fetched from a hidden space behind the tiled stove a wooden chest with chiselled metal clasps, which he had placed there in security from the greedy eyes and hands of the Imperialists.

Before returning it to its wonted place in the small cupboard beneath the window, he put it on the table and opened the complicated lock as if wishing to convince himself that the contents were safe. First came a few ornaments belonging to his daughter, next some gold coins struck in memory of remarkable hunting exploits and presented to him by the Duke or some of his distinguished guests; the remainder of the contents were chiefly letters received from his ducal master relating to hunting and forest affairs, some of them gracious, others the reverse. Once, a stag having been found dead with an antler missing, the Duke wrote wrathfully—

'Find that antler, Ranger, or the sun shall not shine upon thee from now to St. John's Eve; tell Ortman he shall be put on half-pay because of his slovenly ways in the sow's copse-wood park. The foul fiend take you all for being so troublesome. Keep well in mind what I say.

'Datum ut in litteris,

'JOHANN PHILIP.'

The words sound harsh, and the stiff angular writing seemed to suit them, but they could not have been harshly meant, else the Ranger would not have bent such kindly looks on them, for, when all was said and done, was it not the writing of his beloved master? In those days, personal attachment between master and man had not quite died out in German lands.

Slowly the Ranger put the letters back again; but suddenly he started and drew himself up as he caught sight of a piece of paper, the writing on which was blackened by smoke. Illegible though it might be, the Ranger knew it by heart but too well.

At the same moment a sudden gust of wind swept round the house, as is not unusual in autumn. Doors and windows rattled, and the old man shook as if a like storm was agitating him.

Fifteen years had now passed since he had a pretty young wife. He himself was a good-looking fellow then, and they loved each other as husband and wife ought to do; but, as ill-luck would have it, there entered his service a young keeper with so sweet a voice and so rare a talent for singing, that even her Grace up at Altenburg Castle used to send for him to entertain her guests. And with that same voice he turned the Ranger's wife from her husband. She left him and followed the stranger, who came from somewhere near the Rhine. Many called him a prince in disguise on account of his gentle manner and bearing, and perhaps Mistress Lena thought so too, vanity finishing what the sweet voice had begun.

The Ranger was left alone with his little blue-eyed daughter; and though he might have forgiven the wife for leaving him, he could never forgive the mother for leaving her child. Years passed, and no news came of the runaways. Then at last, one evening late, there was brought to him that piece of paper he now held in his trembling hand. It came to call him to the wife, who lay dying in a peasant's hut by the roadside near the crossways.

But the Ranger had not gone to see her. With teeth set hard, he had flung the poor scrawl into the fire burning in the same green-tiled stove that had witnessed their short happy life and then his long years of loneliness.

The next morning, however, Bertha had brought him the half-burnt paper, saying, with the great respect of those days for everything written—

'I suppose, father, you threw this by mistake into the fire.'

To the old man this sounded like a reproof, and he had started off to see his dying wife. But he came too late. She had died, and been buried close by under the dark green beeches.

The Ranger marked the place well, and often wandered thither with Bertha, who never knew that her mother lay sleeping there. They had told her that her mother died long ago, on a journey to her own people up near Brunswick. Who was there, moreover, now to tell her anything to the contrary? She rarely left the forest, and in Altenburg few remembered the Ranger's pretty young wife.

Shilder's grave looks and early grey hair were accounted for easily enough by the dread gift he had inherited from his forefathers, which, though it brought naught but good to others, was inseparably connected with evil.

For just as sovereigns in those days were believed to be able to touch for the king's evil or for goitre, so the family of the Shilders, in the male line, had from time immemorial, it was said, been able to stay the flow of blood. At their touch every wound closed, and hence they had been called the 'Bloodmasters' of Altenburg. The Mathew Shilder of this story was the last survivor of this family, and was naturally enough regarded with some awe, especially as he himself treated his strange power with reverential respect, believing it to be his by right Divine.

However, none of the seriousness of the father had descended to the daughter, who just now entered the room, merrily jingling her empty beer jugs, and followed by her sturdy lover, Conrad, tall, fair, and blue-eyed as the girl herself.

'We may call off our guard, master,' he said; 'nothing is stirring in the woods except the wind.'

'Then we will have something to eat, child,' was Shilder's answer, turning to Bertha; and forthwith he blew a shrill summons on the silver whistle he carried slung round his neck.

Thus summoned, all the keepers soon filed into the room, and in a little while Bertha appeared with a huge bowl filled with a savoury hash of venison. Next she brought a loaf, and, pressing it against her well-rounded bust, cut off one slice after another in quick succession, and with unerring guidance of the knife. Conrad watched her with admiring eyes; he might have gone very far and not seen a prettier or happier girl; this he knew full well, and therefore contentedly bided his time when the Ranger would not grant leave for any immediate espousals.

He made room for her beside himself, and even took one arm off the table, though all the others leant on it with both theirs. Deep silence ensued, while the wooden spoons steadily pursued their business. When the bowl was emptied, Bertha put in its place a platter full of small hard cheeses, so hard that they escaped from the knives of the men and trundled about the table among loud laughter. These were the celebrated 'jumpers,' the principal part of every meal.

The hungry foresters had not nearly appeased their hunger when the dogs, left outside as a precaution, began to bark furiously, and at the same time the sound of hoofs clattering and of many loud voices was heard.

The foresters jumped up, and the maid began once more to shriek; the Ranger and Bertha, however, got up more quietly. Conrad hurried out, but soon returned, after quieting the dogs, accompanied by a sturdy elderly man wearing the Duke's livery.

'Anthony, whatever brings you here?' the Ranger called out, astonished, recognising the Duke's own body-servant.

'His Grace commands your instant attendance at the castle, Ranger,' he said; 'a couple of great lords lie there bleeding to death, and the leeches do not know what to do. We brought a horse for you along with us.'

'Very well, then, I follow you,' submissively answered the Ranger.

And while her father was getting ready, Bertha fetched some beer for the messenger, who in return related all he knew about the late siege, being, of course, listened to open-mouthed by the keepers.

'It was I who reminded his Grace of your father's special powers,' he continued, turning to the girl; 'and then the Duke bade me start at once to fetch him. His Reverence, who stood by, was mad about it, and called it all an old woman's tale of popish nonsense and wicked superstition.'

'Popish nonsense, indeed! Ever since Dr. Martin Luther preached in our parish church, the Rangers of Altenburg have been as good Evangelicals as his Reverence himself,' proudly replied Bertha.

'Of course; and your father will soon prove to the reverend gentleman that he is not in vain called the blood-master,' chuckled Anthony in reply.

Bertha shuddered a little.

'Why, what ails you?' asked the astonished visitor. 'You are not a timid wench, to remain here alone among all these men, and yet you shudder at the mere name of blood.'

'The men will not hurt me; they know that I am their master's daughter, and Conrad is all right. But I have never liked it when they call my father the blood-master, and when the blood stops flowing at his command. However, don't say anything to him about it.'

Anthony nodded; women were always a little silly, he thought. Then the Ranger appeared; Bertha and Conrad watched him mount, and remained standing outside as long as they could hear the horses' hoofs. Conrad held aloft a burning pine torch, and Bertha caressed the large dogs which joyfully jumped up at her. Then she returned within, fastened doors and windows, and quietly sat down to her spinning-wheel by the side of the servant-maid, never heeding the storm which continued raging without.

PART II.

The horses were well-fed and strong, and swiftly carried their riders along the high road to Altenburg. It was by no means a lonely journey; because they met troops of peasants, who, in order to escape the marauding Imperialists, had taken refuge in the walled town, thereby just running into the arms of their enemies. As the troops had, however, now departed, the peasants hastened back to their homesteads. All looked scared, and were full of anxiety as to how their fields and cottages might have fared in their absence. They hurried onwards with their curious flapping hats well pressed down on their foreheads, and carried hidden down in the pockets of their baggy breeches the silver dollar-pieces which in times of peaceful security served them as buttons for their doublets.

But the riders never heeded the peasants, though most of them looked intently if half askance at the blood-master, well-known as he was to all of them. The women even crossed themselves, for it was not only Bertha who dreaded her father's peculiar powers.

Meanwhile, the storm had ceased, and just as they were cantering up the castle hill, the moon broke through the clouds and cast her silvery light on tower and pinnacle, causing everything to stand out clear as if it were daylight.

Small knots of people were seen about everywhere, but all deferentially made way on recognising the blood-master's well-known features.

At the entrance gate the riders dismounted; and Shilder, who knew his way about the castle, went forward alone through the various groups assembled there, till he reached the Duke's presence.

No longer young, the Duke was entirely dressed in black, and looked grave and anxious; his bright blue eyes, however, had a gleam in them—as if on provocation the old Wendic fire might not be slow in blazing forth. He was in conversation with one of his chaplains, a tall, serious-looking man with an expression of countenance half-gentle, half-severe.

The Duke held out his hand, which the Ranger deferentially kissed, and briefly told him to hurry to the wounded, who had been hastily accommodated in various apartments of the castle.

'Do not look so wrathful, my Lord,' said the chaplain, 'the Almighty has exercised tender mercy towards your town of Altenburg.'

He opened the casement and pointed towards the town, which, in the clear moonlight, lay as peaceful as ever, with its slender high spires, stately market-place, and glittering lakes shaded by stately trees, a very jewel of the Saxon land.

The Duke nodded and followed the Ranger, who had already passed down one of the long corridors. The chaplain kept by his master's side, and though it was done very respectfully, he seemed to hurry along with something like youthful eagerness.

'What is the matter with your Reverence?' the Duke asked at last good-humouredly.

'I beg your Grace's pardon, but I am anxious to watch the Ranger's proceedings and see what he does to the wounded. Who can tell what it may be?'

'Folly,' said the Duke abruptly, and his Reverence had not the smallest doubt for whom that was meant, but still he pressed on.

At last he fairly outstripped the Duke, who, however, did not let him go without calling after him.

'Take care what you are about, master chaplain; when the Ranger comes as blood-master, he stands no nonsense!'

The reverend gentleman drew himself up to his full height, as if to intimate that he feared nobody; for who could tell whence this Ranger had his supernatural powers?

Soon he came up with him, but no respectful greeting, such as he was wont to receive, met either ear or eye. The old man did not even seem to see him, though his eyes were opened wide. His hands were folded on his breast and his lips murmured words, but they were inaudible to the chaplain.

'Grant me a word, Master Ranger,' said the chaplain, awed, as it were, in spite of himself.

Shilder answered not, but kept on whispering, and now the chaplain could make out some words of the Lord's Prayer. A little of his mistrust vanished. No work for which such preparation was made could be quite iniquitous. But, after all, was not Satan a deceiver from the beginning, and might not even the Lord's Prayer be put to evil use? Those were strange times; each pious custom was termed superstition, and each inexplicable physical demonstration the devil's work; is it to be wondered at that even the clearest heads sometimes waxed dull? The chaplain *had* a clear head and a heart full of sympathy, but he belonged to his age.

Thus he accompanied the Ranger silently, but nevertheless praying with him; and together they entered the rooms where the wounded lay stretched side by side, Imperialists and Saxons, Catholics and Protestants, for who could at such a time have made a distinction between friends and enemies?

Here they were received by a grave, stately lady in long black robes and a white, gold-bordered lace cap on her handsome head. This was the Duchess Elizabeth, a daughter of the ancient House of Brunswick, who, together with her ladies, had lovingly hurried to nurse the wounded.

'Quick, Shilder, come here,' suddenly called out a shrill voice; 'this poor young fellow is bleeding to death before my eyes.'

The small wizened little man in the snuff-brown coat to whom the voice belonged was the Duke's own physician, and the young fellow a wounded cavalry officer apparently under twenty years of age. There he lay in death-like pallor, with his doublet and shirt torn aside in order to allow better inspection of the wound in his chest.

Slowly the Ranger stepped up to the couch, which was saturated with blood; both chaplain and physician following close behind. Then he placed the forefingers of his right hand on the bleeding wound and solemnly pronounced the words—

'In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.'

The blood ceased to flow, and the wounded man for one moment raised his heavy eyelids and cast a look on him who had saved his life.

The physician, nodding his approval, quickly applied the bandages; but the chaplain seized the blood-master's hand and said—

'You must forgive me, Ranger, for having wronged you in thought. You neither use foolish nor unhallowed means; whatever is done thus reverently in God's holy name can bring harm to none. I may no longer deny your power to heal and save life, see that you never use it but to the honour of Him who gave it.'

The Ranger bowed in silence; but the physician made a grimace, for he liked the chaplain's assumption of spiritual authority on week days just as little as his sermons on Sundays.

While he watched the physician at his work, the Ranger looked graver than ever as the exercise of his supernatural power always filled him with something of awe; and any offer of recompense was sure to call forth a burst of wrath, just as any call to exercise his power lightly called forth a sharp refusal.

Consequently, when the wound was dressed and the patient left tolerably at ease, the doctor had to use all his eloquence in order to persuade Shilder to follow him and once again exert his power on behalf of a young ensign who lay there with one arm shattered. He had clung to his standard till the bullet forced him to loose his hold, and had then held it between his teeth till one of his own troop came and released him.

Also here the blood-master was successful, and the physician's thin face beamed with pleasure.

But when urged to a third attempt, the Ranger grew very restive; and had not the duchess herself beckoned him on, he would certainly not have complied. Half unwilling and quite reluctant he approached the couch of the third sufferer, one of the enemy's officers. It was a proud handsome face, bearing, however, unmistakable traces of a dissolute life that met the eye.

Shilder gave one searching glance, looked again, and suddenly, to every one's consternation, started back with a scarce suppressed exclamation of horror.

'What on earth is the matter, Shilder?' exclaimed the physician; 'are you not going to lay your hand on his wound?'

'Not I, so help me God!' burst from the agitated man. 'Any life else that you ask of me, but his I will not save.'

'Art mad, fellow?' angrily broke in the Duke, who had meanwhile joined the group.

'Not so, your Grace. But he who lies there is my worst enemy.'

'Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you,' gravely admonished the chaplain. 'Remember your power is from above, use it in His service to friend and foe alike. Leave vengeance to the Lord.'

'I cannot, cannot save him!' repeated the Ranger; and lifted his honest eyes, with an expression like that of a hunted deer to his master, as if feeling that he alone could understand him. Then added in lower tones, that somehow sounded far away: 'He is the betrayer of the wife of my youth.'

A deathlike silence followed. Even the chaplain could, in his utter and horrified surprise, find nothing to say, and before he had recovered, the blood-master had left the hall.

Seeing the admonition on the chaplain's face, the Duke said solemnly, 'Your Reverence, what our Ranger has said and done may not be Christian-like, but, by Heaven! it is human, and may God forgive me, but in the like case I should have acted likewise.'

The minister did not answer, but kneeling beside the dying man, he prayed for him earnestly. Half an hour later he expired. The physician said he must have died anyhow, even had the blood been stayed. But the chaplain was filled with terror of the blood-master, and that night prayed long and fervently for the stern unforgiving man.

PART III.

The Ranger had not spared his horse riding to the castle, but returning home he rode like a madman. He never felt that he was bareheaded, and that his grey hair was blown about by the morning breeze; but he did feel his pulses throb and his heart beat wildly.

How often during these lonely years had he thought how he would fight his hated enemy could he but meet him; and now that he had met him, unarmed and disabled, though he could not strike him, he had taken his vengeance all the same.

Was it then true what an inner voice told him, was he a murderer? Ought he to have tried to save him? But the same hard purpose that caused him to leave his dying wife's request unheeded had also made him stay his hand from helping her betrayer.

Strongly moved by conflicting thoughts, the Ranger hurried along; he could already distinguish his dwelling through the open glade, he could hear his dogs bark; but, stop, what was that? They were not barking. It sounded more like a piteous whimpering and howling. What could have happened? And now he had reached the gate and jumped off his horse. All the dogs crowded round him with every sound and token of distress, and nearly dragged him into the house.

What a sight met him there? Everything in the room broken and tossed about, even the hidden chest dragged out and emptied; a corpse at the threshold, over which he had to step into the room, and, could it be possible, Bertha, his only child, lying bleeding and deathlike on the floor supported by Conrad. The blood oozed drop by drop from a small wound in the right temple and made its way down the long fair plaits, staining their shining gold with its dreadful mark. Conrad had tried every device to stop its flow, but in vain.

There was no need to tell the poor father what had happened. The wailing servant, the pale blood-stained faces of his keepers told the tale but too clearly.

A stray detachment of the Imperialists had attacked the lonely forest dwelling while all in it thought themselves perfectly safe. The struggle had been hard, and though they had been forced to surrender their booty and leave behind several of their number killed, still the victory had been dearly bought.

Bertha's good looks had at once attracted the soldiers, Conrad naturally defending her fiercely, and the bullet intended for him had struck her; mortally wounded she had sunk down where she now lay.

Having told this much in brief whispers, the poor young fellow added with heartful relief: 'Now Heaven be praised for your return, help your child as you have helped so many strangers, master.'

Without answering a word, simply sending a supplicating glance heavenwards, the blood-master knelt down beside his child. Gently and slowly he put his fingers on the wound, and solemnly followed the words: 'In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.'

But with horror he saw that the blood did not cease to flow; nay, it seemed as if the drops fell faster and faster. A shudder passed through him and his heart seemed to stop beating. He pressed his fingers firmer on the wound and again called on the Holy Trinity; in vain, the fatal drops went on falling.

'God have mercy,' groaned Conrad, 'she is dying.'

The keepers stood around in horrified dismay; the unhappy father tried to staunch the wound with the girl's own hair, he pressed his lips on it. All in vain; the blood flowed on, and with it life was ebbing away.

Everything grew dark before the blood-master's eyes. His blood surged up, and in his ears rang the words: 'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord.'

And the vengeance had reached him swiftly. The talent entrusted to him had not been used for the Lord's service, and it had been taken from him. The blood-master, who had saved so many lives, could not save his own child.

'It is God's judgment,' he exclaimed with a shudder, and strongly moved thereto, he confessed about his great harshness to his wife and to her lover.

All listened in silence, and silently they shook hands with the repentant sufferer. It was God's judgment, and where He has judged, no human judgment is needed.

Not even Conrad added a word; but he thought of Bertha's great dislike to her father's peculiar gift. Instinctively she must have felt that it would bring her no good. She did not again open her eyes, but for hours after neither father nor lover could believe that she had really left them.

* * * * * *

Since the blood-master could no longer charm the blood, he had fallen from the estimation in which he was held before; not even the physician seemed to remember him. But the Duke remained his constant gracious patron. As long as the Ranger lived he was to continue at his post, so the Duke willed it, and his successor respected the wish.

Also the chaplain never forgot the old Ranger. To the great astonishment of the whole Court circle, the chaplain steadily visited the forester and wrestled with the old Adam in him for the welfare of his soul. And at last he won. The hard old man became gentle and tender, and died peacefully in Conrad's arms while the chaplain knelt by his side.

Soon after, Conrad married, and the old house once more knew young voices and merry laughter.

Then, in 1648, peace came to the German land, and by degrees grief and misery were forgotten. And with the remembrance of the long wars also passed away the remembrance of the blood-master, who in his own heart had experienced that *vengeance belongeth unto the Lord.*

A chest with quaintly chiselled iron clasps and locks was long handed down from one Ranger to another in the forest lodge. The letters and coins it had contained were of course lost and scattered as time went on; but the half-burnt paper, which had lain at the bottom of the chest, that had, at the old Ranger's request, been laid by his side in his coffin. And the last word the old man uttered was —the name of his wife.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE.

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCLXXIV.

1697–1730.

THE IRON HEAD OF SWEDEN.

One remarkable person flashed across Europe, who, Marlborough hoped, might effectively interfere to change the face of the war, somewhat as his predecessor, Gustavus Adolphus, had done in the previous century.

The great Gustavus had left an infant daughter, Christina, who had a full share of the hereditary tendency to insanity of the House of Vasa. In 1654, she had grown weary of reigning, resigned her crown, left Sweden, and wandered about to the countries of Europe, studying art and literature, but with a disregard of all ordinary habits that scandalised everyone. She thought herself above the laws, and when in France, actually put to death one of her suite, considering that her royalty justified her. Louis XIV. was obliged in consequence to expel her from his dominions, and she died at Rome, having joined the Roman Church the year after her abdication.

Her cousin, Charles X., had succeeded her, but died in 1660. Another Charles, son to his sister Katerina, who had married the Count of Zweibrucken, reigned well and prosperously, but died early, so that his son, Charles XII., became King of Sweden at the age of fifteen, in 1697. His mother had died four years previously, and he had since had hardly any training, though he had been thought to show good promise. When asked what he thought of Alexander the Great—

'That I mean to be like him,' he answered.

'But he died at thirty-two,' said his tutor.

'He had lived long enough since he had conquered kingdoms,' said the boy.

At his coronation he showed his determined vehemence and self-will, by omitting the oath of fidelity to his people, and wrenching the crown from the astonished Archbishop of Upsal to put it on with his own hands. He listened to no advice but that of his favourite, Count Piper, and spent most of his time in daring, violent sports, bear and wolf hunting, furious riding, and mock fights.

His neighbours and his subjects alike supposed him a weak, frivolous prince, and a league was formed against him by Frederick IV. of Denmark, Augustus of Saxony, King of Poland, and the Czar Peter of Muscovy, for reconquering some of the possessions that

Sweden had taken from them, especially Riga, on which Peter had already looked with covetous eyes. Livonia was invaded by the Poles and Russians, and Holstein-Gottorp, which belonged to Charles's brother-in-law, was attacked by the King of Denmark.

The young lion was thoroughly awakened. Charles obtained ships from his allies in Holland and England, and sent a land army to relieve the besieged town of Tonneberg, and carried the war into the enemy's quarters by sending the combined fleet to bombard Copenhagen.

He took his troops, which still retained the admirable discipline of the great Gustavus, to carry on the siege by land, disembarking at the little village of Humlebeck, under a heavy fire. He jumped into the sea from his boat, waded to land, waved his sword over his head, and as he heard the whistling of the musquet balls, exclaimed, 'This is the best music I ever heard!'

This attack on his capital caused Frederick to make peace in haste, and Charles hurried off to relieve Riga, which was being besieged by the allied armies of Augustus and Peter. This he saved, and then marched on to Narva, which Peter was besieging with 40,000 Russians and 150 cannon; but they were almost all raw recruits, entirely unused to discipline, hating the French and German officers —who alone understood the rules of service—and without a tolerable gunner among them. The French and German officers quarrelled, and while Peter had gone for a few days to raise levies in Novgorod, Charles, with his 8000 but excellently-organised Swedes, fell upon the besiegers, and totally routed them, so that 18,000 are said to have been drowned in the Narva during the flight, and all the guns were taken. A spent ball struck Charles in the throat, but buried itself in the folds of his black cravat. His horse was killed, but he lightly sprang on another, saying, 'These fellows put me through my exercises.'

He entered Narva triumphantly carrying his prisoners with him, among them the young Georgian prince who had been so much admired at Berlin. Peter was advancing from Novgorod when he learnt the disaster that had befallen him. 'The Swedes will beat us for a good while,' he said, 'but we shall learn to beat them at last.'

This splendid victory, gained at eighteen years of age, naturally filled the head of Charles with dreams of conquest and fed his self-opinionativeness. His special hatred was against the King of Poland, Augustus, Elector of Saxony. This personage was a man of great personal beauty and size, and so strong that he could bend a horse-shoe with his fingers, so that the Turks called him 'Nalkiran,' or the breaker of horse-shoes. He was very rich, and his luxurious, dissipated habits, and the splendour of his surroundings, are almost beyond credence. He had obtained his election to the crown of Poland, after the death of the great Sobieski in 1697, by bribery and the influence of Russia, and had renounced the Lutheran faith to become a Roman Catholic in order to qualify himself. Charles, sternly and rudely plain and Spartan in his habits, hated and despised him equally. 'If it takes me fifty years,' he said, 'I will never rest till I have driven him from his throne.'

Augustus and Peter had a meeting at Birzen in Lithuania, and caroused together for a fortnight, in a manner only too congenial to both, but in their sober moments they agreed that Peter should lend 50,000 men to Augustus to fight his battles while learning German discipline, and that Saxony would pay three million rix dollars in two years. At the same time, he was casting fresh cannon out of the church bells, and building a fleet in the Lakes of Pepus and Ladoga, but he found that the Russians hated the Poles so much that he could not fulfil his engagement, and had to leave Augustus unsupported.

That king was besieging Riga, but was ill and not present with his army, which was under the Duke of Courland, and Count Patkul. Charles had had transports built with decks that could be raised and lowered like drawbridges, so as to shelter the troops they carried, or to serve as bridges at a disembarkation. Observing that the wind was blowing from his camp to that of the Saxons, he set fire to a mass of straw, so that the smoke rushing down, entirely hid his crossing of the Dwina; and the Saxons were taken by surprise, and though they fought gallantly, they were routed. Charles carried all before him in Lithuania, and presently arrived at Birzen. As he was there making a very abstemious meal in deep silence, a German colonel who was present, could not help saying that this was not like the banquets of the Czar and the King of Poland at the same place a little before. 'I shall trouble their digestion,' Charles said. His successes were inflaming his conceit and obstinacy, and he determined to advance into Poland, espousing the cause of James Sobieski, the son of the great John, and supported by a number of the nobles, who were much disgusted with Augustus and his Saxons.

In May, 1702, he reached Warsaw, where the Polish primate came to see him, and found him in a coarse blue suit with gilded buttons, heavy boots, and buffalo leather gloves reaching to his elbows. After an interview of a quarter of an hour, his ultimatum was—'No peace with the Poles till they have elected another king.'

Then he pushed on towards Cracow, defeating Augustus on the way at Clissau, but there losing his brother-in-law, the Duke of Holstein. Cracow fell at once, and the tombs of the kings of Poland were plundered.

While leaving Cracow, Charles was thrown from his horse and broke his thigh. While he was laid up, tidings came of successes gained by Peter at Einbach in Livonia, where the Swedes were beaten by twice their number.

'Two to one,' said Peter; 'by-and-by it shall be man to man.'

Charles was strongly advised to hasten to this part of his dominions on his recovery, but he was determined to hunt Augustus out of Poland. The Diet had deposed that Prince, and James Sobieski was at Breslau, hourly expecting to be called to wear his father's crown, when, as he and his brother Constantine were in the midst of a chase, thirty Saxon horsemen pounced on them and carried them off to Leipsic.

The Diet would have elected their younger brother Alexander, but he refused, and Count Piper wished to induce Charles himself to assume the crown, and establish Protestantism in Poland, so as to be like Gustavus, Defender of the Evangelic Faith, but he said he would rather give kingdoms away than govern them; and under his influence, the Diet elected a young Palatine called Stanislas Lecksinski.

'He is about my age'—which was twenty-two, said Charles, when his youth was made an objection.

In the meantime, while pushing on his attacks against Augustus, Charles neglected that Livonian and Finland frontier where Peter was at work, for his victory at Narva made him treat the Russians as beneath contempt. Thus the indefatigable Peter took several cities, among them the town of Marienberg, where a Swedish soldier at the last moment blew up all the magazines of ammunition. In anger, the Russians made the inhabitants prisoners. Among them was a young girl named Catherine Skavrouski, who had, since she was left an orphan at three years old, been bred up in the family of a Lutheran minister named Gluck, and the very day before the assault had been married to a serjeant, who was killed in the explosion. Catherine became one of the numerous train of camp followers always accompanying an ill-regulated army, and thus came under the notice of the Czar, who had quarrelled irreconcilably with his wife and shut her up in a convent.

The town of Notteberg on an island in Lake Ladoga was next taken, and then followed Nyenschantz at the mouth of the Neva, a dismal unwholesome-looking place in the midst of marshes. Yet to Peter's eye it was most important. It was the opening to the Gulf of Finland, and thence to the Baltic. Hitherto Archangel had been his only sea-port, and that was closed by ice through eight or nine months of the year. The Baltic, though ice-bound for at least half that period, and only practicable through a labyrinth of straits, bordered by alien lands, seemed to him the road to civilisation and progress, and he determined to erect a modern city at its nearest point. Only a fortnight after the surrender of Nyenschantz, he laid the foundation-stone of Petersburg in the midst of the marshes. The work seemed hopeless, the place was all one morass full of stagnant pools, and the very attempts to drain them caused the death of hundreds of the workmen; but Peter was like the old despotic sovereigns of the east, dealing summarily with unlimited numbers of men who durst not even dream of disobeying the Czar, and drains were made, soil raised, docks formed, which took shape so quickly, that before the end of 1703, there were two hundred thousand available habitations.

The extraordinary barbaric splendour of the many-coloured cupolas and domes of Moscow, so admirably fitted to the climate and material, was thought by him half savage and despicable. His new city was to be in the taste of Amsterdam and London, under the influence of the architecture of Louis XIV.; and thus it rose, as modern and as little national as possible. It was wood at first, so that Charles of Sweden laughed and said—

'Let him build his wooden houses! We shall soon batter them down!'

Gordon asked him what was the use of building ships when he had no seaports to put them into.

'My ships shall make ports for themselves,' he answered, and he himself drew the plan of a fort for a little island commanding the mouth of the Neva, made it almost impregnable, and called it Cronstadt. The first Dutch traders who found their way to the new city were rewarded with presents, and traffic with foreign lands was thus begun.

At this time Peter lodged in a little house, which is still preserved as a relic, with space in it only for a small bed, table and chair. He rose at five, and worked with head or hands till one, when he dined on a dish called tchee, composed of milk and cabbage, or pork with clotted cream, or beef with pickled cucumber, accompanied with copious draughts of wine.

He found time to meet the dethroned King of Poland at Grodno, being persuaded by Count Patkul. This man, a Livonian by birth, had been in opposition to Charles XI. of Sweden, and had been banished by him, on which he entered the service of Augustus of Saxony, and fought against the Swedes; but on a quarrel with General Flemming, he passed over to Muscovy, and from the lack of intelligence among native Russians, Peter had been obliged to send him back to Augustus as ambassador. They both seem to have suspected him of double dealing, for no sooner was Peter called away from the conference by an insurrection in Astrachan, than Augustus threw the unfortunate man into prison.

The Russians whom Peter had lent to Augustus were almost savages, and terrible pillagers, while Charles preserved in great measure the discipline of Gustavus; and this gave him a great advantage. He beat one army on the Don, and his Grand Marshal Renschild another on the Oder, at Frauenstadt, on the second of February, 1706. So rapid was the victory that 7000 musquets, never discharged, were picked up on the battlefield. All the Russian prisoners were shot, by way of reprisals for their cruelty and violence; but there was a French regiment which had laid down their arms at the battle of Blenheim, and had afterwards entered the service of Augustus, whence they begged to be transferred to that of Sweden.

Nothing but Cracow was left to Augustus in Poland, and he was there when he learnt that Charles was actually in Saxony, having crossed Silesia without deigning to inform the German Emperor, to whom that province belonged, as part of his hereditary dominions. The Diet of Ratisbon declared Charles an enemy of the Empire as soon as he had passed the Oder. The peasantry fled at his approach, but when it was known that his troops did not plunder, and paid for all that was brought them, they returned to his camp, which he set up at Altenstadt, not far from the death-field of Gustavus Adolphus. On going to Lutzen to see 'the stone of the Swede,' he said, 'I have tried to live like him. May heaven grant me an equally glorious death!'

One day a Saxon peasant came to ask for redress against a Grenadier who had carried off the feast intended for his family. Charles sent for the soldier. 'Sire,' said he, 'I did not serve him so badly as you served his master—I only took a turkey. You took a kingdom.'

The King laughed, and gave ten ducats to the peasant. He pardoned the soldier, but said, 'Remember that if I took a kingdom, I did not keep it for myself.'

Augustus had begun to negotiate in secret, when Prince Menschikoff arrived with 30,000 Russians, and attacking a much smaller body of Swedes, almost against the will of his ally, won an unexpected victory, which brought him back to Warsaw. His affairs, however, were so hopeless that he still accepted Charles's conditions. These were that he should renounce Poland, give up the Russian alliance, release the Sobieskies, and yield up Patkul. The two kings met at Gutenburg, but Charles would talk of nothing but his boots, which he told Augustus he never took off except in bed!

Poor Patkul was broken on the wheel, the warrant being signed by Charles himself, to the horror of all Europe, and the great wrath of Peter, especially as the execution was more than usually barbarous.

Charles remained in his camp at Altenstadt, and there received ambassadors from all nations. One of them was the Duke of Marlborough, who hoped to bring him into the alliance against France, so as the sooner to end the war, but Charles's mind was so entirely set upon the overthrow of Peter that he scarcely paid attention to other affairs. His whole soul was set upon an invasion of Russia. He neglected to support his generals on the side of Finland, and left Narva and Dorpt to be taken by Peter in 1704. The Czar employed all the time that Charles had spent upon Saxony in strengthening and training his fleet and army, so that he was in much better condition to meet such an attack than at the opening of his reign. 'My brother of Sweden wants to play the part of Alexander,' he said; 'but he shall not find a Darius in me.'

Nevertheless, when in 1708 Charles crossed the Vistula with 80,000 men, he had almost surprised the Czar at Grodno. With 800 guards, the King dashed up to that city, and a German officer reported that the whole army was there. Peter was obliged to escape beyond the ramparts, and Charles took up his lodging in the Jesuit college. Some of the fathers, perceiving the state of the case, repaired to the Czar by night, and explained to him. He hoped to turn the tables on the King, and returned with 2000 men. There was a fight in the streets, but on the actual arrival of the King's army, Peter retreated on Moscow.

Charles expected to have been joined by many Russians, alienated from their Czar by his reforms; but no one joined him, and he was defeated on the banks of the Beresina river, of ill omen to the invader. Still he pushed on, in strange vain confidence, never securing his retreat, while Peter patiently bided his time behind the Dnieper. Utter want of provisions began to check him, but instead of going on to Moscow, he turned aside to the Ukraine, on the invitation of Ivan Mazeppa, Hetman of the Cossacks. This man was born in Podolia, and had been first page to a Polish nobleman, who, for great misconduct, had inflicted on him the horrible punishment of being bound on the back of a wild horse turned loose in the plains. The creature came from the Ukraine, and rushed back; Mazeppa was unbound while still alive, and soon signalised himself as a leader of the Cossacks against their enemies the Tartars. He had risen to be their chief, and had been confirmed as their Hetman by Peter, but one of that monarch's rude contemptuous speeches had rankled in his mind, and he probably also hoped to recover independence for the Cossacks, for he invited Charles into the Ukraine, declaring that there would be plenty of provisions, and the people ready at once to join the Swedish standard and attack Moscow. He promised to meet the King at the river Desna, with 30,000 men, and with stores of food, ammunition, and treasure.

Through fifty leagues of birch forest interspersed with bogs, the Swedish army was dragged in hopes of the meeting. But all that met them was Mazeppa himself, with a handful of followers. The main body of the Cossacks had no notion of following a stranger. They had fallen upon his men, broken them up and plundered all that Mazeppa had collected, sending to the Czar to appoint another Hetman. The next hope was in General Levenhaupt, who was to bring 15,000 Swedes with provisions and ammunition, in 8000 waggons, and money levied in Lithuania.

The Czar resolved to stop his progress and met him at Lesna. His numbers were 40,000, but each Swede was worth ten Russians, and both sides knew it. Peter said to his rear guard, 'Shoot at whoever flies, even myself, if I am coward enough to give way.' There were really five different engagements that day and the next, in which the Swedish nation at first had the advantage, but the Russians finally gained the day by force of numbers and desperation; and Levenhaupt finally joined his master with only 5000 men, and nothing else.

There was Charles, in the very heart of Russia, without supplies, cut off alike from home and from Poland, and with just such a winter setting in as that by which Generals January and February fought the battles of Russia a century later. The men's clothes and boots were worn out, and they covered their feet with skins, food ran short, and was as bad as possible. A soldier in complaint showed the King a bit of ration bread, black and mouldy, made of barley and oats. Charles quietly swallowed it, and said, 'It is not good, but it can be eaten.' Horses failed, so that most of the cannon had to be thrown into rivers or sunk in bogs, and 2000 men died of cold and hunger on the march. All the food to be had was collected by Mazeppa, and the Russians continually harassed the miserable army with skirmishes till the January of 1709, when the severity of the weather forced on a suspension of arms by mutual consent.

In February, however, the combats began again, and by May, Charles had laid siege to Pultowa, where the Czar had some magazines. The capture would have opened the way to Moscow, and his hopes were high, but as he was reconnoitering, a musquet shot shattered the bone of his heel. He made no sign, and remained for six hours in the saddle before the blood was observed. He held his leg while the bullet was extracted and showed no token of pain.

The next morning came tidings that Peter and his army were upon him. He gave orders to prepare for battle the next day, and was carried in a litter at the head of his own division. There he was successful and thought the battle gained, but the Russians had inexhaustible numbers, and seventy-two guns, while the Swedes had only four. The attack was renewed the next morning with great fierceness. A ball shattered Charles's litter, and the numbers of Russians were absolutely overwhelming to troops exhausted by the battle of the day before. The King was like one stunned. He could not give orders for flight; nor was defence possible. The Polish General Prince Poniatowski put him on horseback, and rallying about five hundred men, chiefly officers, of different corps, forced a way through ten regiments of Russians, and reached the camp. All this time the King had never uttered a word, though two horses had been shot down under him, and he had been twice lifted up and remounted by devoted men, who gave their lives for him. At last, he opened his mouth to ask for Count Piper.

'A prisoner with all the ministry.'

'General Renschild and the Duke of Wurtemberg?'

'Also prisoners, sire,' said Poniatowski.

'Prisoners to the Russians!' said Charles; 'rather to the Turks!'

It was quite true that they were captives—18,746 Swedes were prisoners, 9,280 had been killed! Never was victory more complete; but Peter was only disappointed at hearing nothing of the King.

'Where is my brother Charles?' he continually asked.

He treated the captive generals with much consideration. He inquired how many men they had brought into the field. Renschild said that the King kept the muster-roll to himself, but that he thought the number was about 30,000. Peter asked how they could venture so far into an enemy's country no better provided.

'We were not consulted,' was the answer. 'We had only to obey.'

'That is the way to serve!' said Peter. They all dined together, and he gave the toast—'To the health of my masters in the art of war.'

'Whom does your Majesty thus distinguish?' asked Renschild.

'Yourselves, gentlemen,' said the Czar. But while thus treating the Swedes with all the politeness he was capable of, he had the unfortunate Cossacks of Charles's army broken on the wheel.

Meantime, Poniatowski had found a wretched calèche, into which he put the worn-out and exhausted King and a badly-wounded general, and every one made haste to leave the camp as best they might, some in carts, some on horseback, the rest on foot, straggling through a waste, under a burning sun, with only one muddy stream of water in their five hours' dreadful journey. Many fell down and died, Charles's carriage broke down, and the pain of his foot conquered even his indomitable spirit, so that he was forced to rest at the foot of a tree before he could ride on.

At last the miserable army reached the Bagh, the frontier river between the Muscovite and Turkish possessions; but the natives prevented them from crossing till they had referred to the Pasha of Ocksakow, the neighbouring town, and he would not give permission till he had referred to the Seraskier of Bessarabia. The Russians were coming up in pursuit, and at last the Pasha sent a little boat in which he gave consent for the King and two or three attendants to cross. However, the Swedes began to seize the boats, and the Turks fearing to lose payment, came in crowds to bargain for ferrying them across. Still, no less than five hundred were left behind, and were captured by the Russians.

The Seraskier, when his orders did at length arrive, sent Charles a magnificent tent, with an Aga, who put every kind of accommodation at his disposal. He remained near Bender, making a fortified camp which became a little town. The Turkish mind was much impressed by his stern ascetic habits, abstinence from wine, stolid indifference to fate, and his attendance at prayers twice a day. They declared that he was worthy to be a Mussulman, and gave him an allowance of five hundred crowns a day, but he was to all intents and purposes a prisoner for many a weary month, while Peter, Augustus, and the King of Denmark took advantage of his disasters, and the deserted state of Sweden. Peter secured Livonia and Esthonia, and the Danes invaded Sweden. Happily one general, Magnus Stenbock, had been sent home in ill-health. He got together 15,000 peasants, in wooden shoes, flaxen smock frocks, sheepskin jackets and coarse woollen coats, and handled them so well that they effectually drove back Frederick's best regiments.

At last Charles induced Sultan Achmet to declare war against Russia. This was begun by arresting Peter's ambassador. The Czar set off in a fury, on the invitation of the Hospodar of Wallachia, but it was a repetition of Charles's adventures, no one joined him, and he was in a desert, shut in between the river Pruth and the enemy, Turks on one side, Tartars on the other. There were three days of desperate fighting at Jassy, and the Russian army was so diminished that Peter, finding the ammunition reduced to four rounds, sent off a message to Moscow, that if he were made prisoner, he should no longer be treated as Czar. Then he fell into convulsions, and could not be seen, but Catherine, who had come with him, finding from the generals that unless a treaty were made, the lives of all the army would be lost, sent all the jewels she could muster, and a huge promise of more if the Vizier would treat with the Czar. The terms were the surrender of Azof and the return of Charles to Sweden. She carried them to Peter, and he owned that she had saved him and his army. She was rewarded by being publicly owned as wife and Czaritza.

Just as he had retreated, Charles arrived eager for battle. He swam his horse across the Pruth, and on learning what had happened, strode into the Grand Vizier's tent and reproached him.

'I have the right to make peace or war,' said the Vizier.

'But,' answered the King, 'had you not the whole Muscovite army in your power?'

Our law ordains,' gravely replied the Vizier, 'that we should grant peace to our enemies when they beg for mercy.'

'What?' cried the King angrily, 'does it command you to make a disadvantageous treaty when you could have what terms you please? Could you not have brought the Czar a prisoner to Constantinople?'

'And who would rule his empire, in his absence?' replied the Vizier. 'We cannot have *all* the sovereigns away from home.'

Charles gave a haughty smile, and throwing himself upon a pile of cushions, stretched out his leg, entangled his wet dirty spur in the Turk's flowing robe, and tore it—then springing up, without a word, remounted his horse, and rode back to Bender. This unworthy ebullition of spite, Voltaire says he heard from Poniatowski, who was present, and remained behind him to try to make the Turk press the Emperor harder, but the interview was ended by the Mahometan hour of prayer.

The Turks wished to be rid of Charles, and Sultan Achmet advanced large sums to pay his debts and help him home; but this unreasonable man spent the money and would not go. He even had twenty fine horses shot, which were sent him for the journey, and set to work to entrench his camp, apparently merely because he was too obstinate to stir at the command of another.

At last, Achmet could bear it no longer, and ordered the camp at Bender to be assaulted, while all who resisted should be put to the sword. Charles's chaplains entreated on their knees that he would not thus cause the massacre of his faithful people, but he flew into a passion, and told them that he kept them for prayers, not advice.

Turks and Tartars came up in full force against the Iron Head, as they well called Charles. Baron Grothusen on his own responsibility obtained a truce of three days from the Janissaries, but still Charles would not yield. Ten cannons were brought, and all his soldiers, now only five hundred in number, made prisoners.

About forty servants and twenty officers remained to him. He barricaded himself with these in the hall of his house, and when the Janissaries broke in defended himself desperately. A pistol shot carried away part of his ear. And finally when the house was set on fire, they make a sally, fighting their way, but the King's spurs became entangled, and he fell, throwing away his sword, in order not to have to yield it. He was carried by the legs and arms to the Pasha's quarters.

He was taken to Demotica, where he fell sick. Nothing was heard of him, and he was supposed to be dead, but at the end of eleven months, in October, 1714, a letter from his sister determined him on starting. He had at first a Turkish escort, but he dismissed them, crossed Europe in disguise at his headlong pace, and at length, worn out and dirty, he arrived at Stralsund at midnight.

For sixteen days he had only slept in a cart, and his legs were so swollen that his boots had to be cut off. Yet as soon as he had a few hours' rest, he was inspecting his troops and fortifications. Thus ended his strange expedition, after an absence of six years from Sweden, when he had ruined a splendid army by a wrong-headed obstinacy that can hardly have been far distant from insanity.

LECTURES ON CHURCH HISTORY. GIVEN AT WINCHESTER.

BY THE EDITOR.

SECOND SERIES.

II.—*Continued.*

We have all known, ever since we can remember, the conversation that was the spark to light in our land the fire that has never gone out. Let us take Wordsworth's description—

> 'A bright-haired company of youthful slaves—
> Beautiful strangers—stand within the pale
> Of a sad market, ranged for public sale,
> Where Tiber's stream th' immortal city laves,
> Angli by name, and not an angel waves
> His wing, who could seem lovelier to man's eye
> Than they appear to holy Gregory,
> Who, having learnt that name, salvation craves
> For them and for their land. The earnest sire,
> His questions urging, feels in slender ties
> Of chiming sound, commanding sympathies;
> De-iraus, he would save them from God's ire;
> Subjects of Saxon Ella, they shall sing
> Glad alleluias to the Heavenly King.'

The boys, as they came from Deira, or Deerland, had probably been made captives by the Cumbrian Britons of Strath-Clyde, and transmitted to a Jew merchant through the Irish slave-dealers, who, even on to the time of the conquest, seem to have acted the part of the Arabs at present in Eastern Africa. Yet it would be an interesting study, in how many cases slave-dealing has been the means of spreading the knowledge of the Gospel.

The priest, whose attention was attracted by these children, was a figure so important in the history alike of the whole Church and of our branch, that we cannot pass him with a mere cursory mention.

Gregory was of one of the noblest of the old families still remaining in shattered Rome, and was bred up to the secular life. He was Prætor when Italy was overrun by the Lombards, and he then protected the city so well, and showed so much beneficence to the people, as to gain their hearts. He was all the time much interested and attracted by the religious rule which St. Benedict was establishing at Monte Cassino; and, indeed his mother, after her husband's death, became a nun.

After a long struggle with himself, he made his decision, gave his wealth to found monasteries in Sicily, turned his own palace on the Cœlian Hill into one, and there took the monastic vows. He fasted so constantly that his only food was pulse, which his mother daily sent him in a silver porringer, the last remnant of their former wealth, and this, ere long, was given away to a shipwrecked sailor. Indeed, his fasts were so severe, that he injured his health, and suffered all the rest of his life, so as to be unable to keep even the ordinary fasts.

He was too valuable to be left to study, devotion, and seclusion, in his cell. The Pope sent him on an embassy to Constantinople; and on his return, he was elected Abbot of the Monastery of St. Andrea.

Then it was that his spirit was moved by the sight of the Anglian children. He hastened to the Pope, Pelagius II., and extorted permission from him to go and attempt the conversion of Britain. He had actually set off, but the people surrounded the Pope at St. Peter's, making such clamorous lamentations at the loss of their beloved Gregory, that Pelagius revoked his consent, and sent after Gregory, who was brought back after three days' journey. He felt probably as St. Paul did, when he was not suffered to preach at Troas, but he seems to have prepared by purchasing slaves and educating them to serve as interpreters.

In 590, Rome was visited by a fearful pestilence, of which Pope Pelagius II. died, and the unamimous voice of senate, people, and clergy called for Gregory; but his election had to be confirmed by the Emperor. While the messengers were on the way to Constantinople, he organised a procession of all orders of men and women, to utter earnest petitions against the pestilence, chanting the Litany, an intercession as had been already devised by Bishop Mamertus of Vienne, in a time of special distress. Eighty persons sank out of the procession and died, but Gregory saw, on the Great Mausoleum, or Mole of Adrian, the angel with his sword, and he prayed, as did David, for Jerusalem. The plague was stayed, and the name of the Castle of St. Angelo commemorates the vision.

Gregory's reign as Pope well earned him the title of Great, while his writings on the Book of Job, on the Prophet Ezekiel, on the Canticles, on the Gospels, as well as his pastoral discourse, have caused him to be reckoned as the fourth of the Latin Fathers of the Church. One of his works was a revision of the Liturgy, which had been previously arranged by his predecessor, Gelasius, in 499. The Sacramentary of St. Gregory is the source of most of our collects. He collected chants and sacred tunes, established a school of music, and left to the Church the system of devotional chanting still called by his name. The Pope had to be, not only the bishop, but the protector, of the Romans against their enemies, and Gregory had to deal with the Lombards, and by his negotiations concluded a desolating war of thirty years. He had a struggle with the Patriarch of Constantinople, who, in right of his diocese being the Imperial City, arrogated to himself the title of Universal Patriarch. It is to be observed, however, that Gregory never claimed to be himself Universal Patriarch, he only asserted the independence of the Latin Church. Indeed, the ecclesiastical and political troubles caused to him by the Greeks betrayed him into the only action in his life that can be censured, namely, that when the Emperor Maurice, a good man, who had repented most deeply of his only evil action, was murdered with his whole family by a usurper named Phocas, Gregory gave all the customary compliments and congratulations to the new Emperor, and we have no room for hoping that he did so without full information. He must have excused it to himself on the plea that the early Christians gave allegiance to the Emperors without questioning whether they had waded through slaughter to a throne. This is the only blot in a noble career.

Gregory constantly fed the poor at his table, and called himself the servant of the servants of God, a title adopted and continued by his successors.

It was not till the year 595 that he at last saw his way to attempting something towards the evangelisation of the land of the angel-faced children, whom he had never forgotten. He seems to have learnt that there was a Christian lady sharing the Jutish throne in Kent, and he decided that the opportunity was not to be lost. He therefore sent Augustine, a monk and priest of his own Convent on the Cœlian, as leader of a band of forty other clergy, furnished with letters and presents to Ethelbert, Bertha, and Liudhard, and letters recommending them to the bishops of all the chief Gallic cities through which they had to pass; and they were kindly welcomed in Provence, which was still completely Roman, and only disturbed by occasional plundering expeditions from the Goths and Franks. There, however, the expedition to the savage conquerors of Britain was thought a fearful risk, and Augustine heard such accounts of the violence of the barbarians, and the difficulty of their language, that the party were terror-stricken, and after consultation, decided that Augustine should return to Rome to entreat the Pope not to drive them into useless dangers.

Zeal must have been singularly lacking in the Roman Church, since Gregory could find none save these unwilling agents. He refused to consent to their return, but the letter was gentle and encouraging, instead of severe, as he called them his dearest sons, and entreated them not to turn back from the good work they had undertaken, but to give him the joy of their success. He also gave further recommendations to the Gallic bishops, and to Queen Brunehault, whose crimes were yet in the future, and whose husband had been uncle to Queen Bertha.

Still their journey through Gaul seems to have been trying, and they thought the waves of the British Channel less inhospitable than the Franks. When at last they landed at Ebbsfleet, in the sandy flats of the Isle of Thanet, it was the 14th of April, 597. Thence Augustine sent a message to the King of Kent, that they were come from Rome to him with the best of tidings, namely, how to secure to himself an everlasting kingdom.

Ethelbert replied graciously that he would come and confer with them, but he was afraid that these strangers, from the wonderful city dimly reported of in England, might use magic arts, so he insisted on meeting them in the open air.

The monks, to receive him, formed themselves into a procession, all white robed, and carrying before them a silver cross, and a board painted with a representation of the crucifixion. Honorius, a tall dark man, the pupil of Gregory, headed the procession, and the brethren, as they went, joined their voices in a solemn Litany. Ethelbert sat under an oak-tree to receive them, surrounded with his warriors. Augustine, by the help of an interpreter, expounded to him the outlines of the Christian faith.

'You speak fair words,' said the King; 'but I do not understand them fully. I am not ready to give up the customs of the English folk, but since you have come from far, to teach us what is good and true, you shall be unharmed and received as guests, nor do we forbid our people from joining you.'

Accordingly, in Ascension week, 597, they entered Canterbury in the same solemn procession, bearing aloft the cross and banner, and singing their Litany. It was the day of St. Columba's farewell far away in the north in Iona. So is the lamp kindled from point to point!

Liudhard was dead, but they succeeded to his little old church of St. Martin, dwelling in a place called Stable Gate, because they stabled there. Ethelbert must have been already prepared to receive Christianity, for on the next Whitsunday, June 2nd, 597, he was baptised.

He made it known that he did not compel any one to follow his example. Nevertheless, a very large number did embrace Christianity, and on the assembly of the Witenagemôt, a code of laws was enacted, known as the Dooms of Ethelbert, and accepting Christianity, though the temples of Woden and Thor were not overthrown. Afterwards there was a great baptism, of full 10,000 persons, on the Christmas Day of that great year 597.

The King, at the same time, gave his own abode at Canterbury as a dwelling-place for the monks, and on the adjacent ground was laid the foundation of the Cathedral of Christ's Church, while the King withdrew to Reculver, giving licence for the restoration of any old Christian churches in Canterbury. St. Pancras' Church was thus restored, and an old brick arch is believed to be a remnant from those days. Outside the walls Augustine likewise founded another monastery under the dedication of St. Peter and St. Paul, with a burying-place round it.

It, however, was universally called after his name, and after 1300 years of prosperity and 300 of desolation, it has for the last forty years flourished in its revival as our great missionary college.

Augustine then, according to the directions previously given to him by the Pope, repaired to Arles for Episcopal consecration, which was bestowed on him by three prelates of the Gallo-Frankish Church as Archbishop of the English.

Augustine then sent two of his companions with letters to ask counsel from Gregory. They set forth in 598, but the answers are dated in 601. Probably their journey through Gaul was tardy, and there is reason to think that they may have been delayed at Rome by the Pope's severe illness from gout, and likewise by the difficulty of finding fresh assistants for the mission. Four were added, one a very remarkable man, and two more men whose names we shall meet again. These were Paulinus, Mellitus, and Justus.

Therewith Gregory sent answers to the inquiries sent him by Augustine. The most important was respecting the variations of the ritual of the Celtic Churches from that of Rome, to which, as already stated, Gregory had paid much attention, being the great liturgical scholar of his day. He advised Augustine to adapt the rite, 'collecting, as in a bundle, the best usages of Rome, Gaul, and other churches.' Then, to the question whether consecration of a bishop by a single bishop were valid, the answer was, that Gregory thought that they were so in cases of necessity, and that Augustine standing alone, might have to consecrate fresh bishops, but if possible, Gallican bishops should be present as witnesses, and that when fresh ones were appointed in England, they should assemble for a consecration.

Another question was how to deal with the bishops of Gaul and Britain.

The answer to this was, that Augustine had no jurisdiction whatever in Gaul, but that the British bishops were committed to his care and authority. Gregory no doubt considered that he had a right to make this arrangement as Patriarch of the West; but in point of fact, the original Roman Patriarchate had never extended as far as either Gaul or Britain, though in Gaul constant intercourse had been kept up and deference paid to the decisions of Rome, but in the British mountain churches, cut off as they were by the hosts of barbarians, for full a century, the connection had been cut off and forgotten.

In another letter, Gregory contemplated the foundation of twelve dioceses, apparently supposing Augustine's seat to be in London, and sending him therewith a pall, which was becoming the ensign of the metropolitan, or bishop of the Mother city of a province.

This pallium was originally a cloak made of some rich material, and worn by grandees on great occasions. The emperors wore it, and the gift was a mark of favour, and conferring of dignity. The Patriarchs thus gave it to the chief bishop of a province, and it became in time the mark of a metropolitan or archbishop.

Gradually it dwindled from a handsome heavy cloak to a sort of scarf, with a straight piece hanging down in front parted so as to go round the neck. Then it came to be spun and woven of the wool of the lambs blessed by the Pope on St. Agnes' Day, but with our Archbishops, it merely figures in the arms of the See of Canterbury as a large Y with a little cross on it.

Metropolis, Mother City, was at first the parent colony whence fresh settlements spread out; then it became a term for the seat of government in a Roman province, and this was generally the first centre whence church teaching went out in the district, so that the metropolis was usually a considerable city. London was the Roman metropolis, so, in the secular point of view, this title for that city is not incorrect; and Gregory, with views formed on the old provinces of the Empire, did not understand that it belonged to the East Saxon if to any kingdom, and intended it for the metropolitan see; but facts were too strong for him, and Canterbury has held that rank almost 1300 years.

With the pall came a supply of altar furniture and vessels, vestments for clergy, and a number of manuscripts, including one entire Bible, two copies of the Gospels, two Psalters, besides several more, all in cases adorned with gold and jewels. Oxford and Cambridge each lay claim to the possession of one of these precious Gospels, and the Cambridge one is pretty certainly genuine, but that in the Bodleian is, alas! pronounced to date fifty years later.

There was also a letter to Ethelbert, exhorting him to destroy idolatry, and another to Bertha, bidding her make up for her former tardiness by greater zeal, and to set before herself the example of the Empress Helena. Presents accompanied these letters.

The new-comers seem to have arrived with their letters and presents in the year 601, only three years before the death of the great Pope and Latin Father Gregory. For years he had suffered grievously from gout and other maladies, the consequence, it was thought, of the severe regimen of his earlier days. 'The cry of pain rings through his letters,' one of his biographers says. 'My illness will neither leave me nor kill me,' he wrote, begging the Patriarch of Alexandria to pray for his being set free in the glory of God. He was only fifty-five years old when he died, on the 12th of March, 604, when, as his epitaph at St. Peter's says, 'the Consul of God went to enjoy eternal triumph.'

His wisdom and earnestness were a great loss. In the meantime, however, Augustine invited the bishops and clergy of the British Church to hold a conference with him on the means of establishing Catholic peace and unity.

They were not very willing, they naturally disliked whatever was connected with their Saxon enemies, and they heard with patriotic aversion that this new-comer, bishop of their enemies, whose see was not ten years old, claimed jurisdiction over their three centuries' old

Church. Besides, these Roman clergy kept the Paschal feast by a new-fashioned reckoning; they cut their hair, instead of leaving it long and flowing, and the ceremonies with which they baptised were elaborate!

Still they undertook to meet him on the borders. St. Augustine's oak for some time marked the spot; but since it has disappeared, the locality has been disputed between Assentree, near Merton, in Worcestershire, and Anst, or Anstcliff, not far from Chepstow. It was evidently on the border-land between the Britons and West Saxons.

St. David was dead, and there does not seem to have been any very distinguished person among the representatives of the Celtic Church. Augustine seems to have made a speech representing the extreme inconvenience of the discrepancy to the Feast of Easter, telling the Britons that their cycle was obsolete, and moreover that they were wrong in keeping the Sunday of the full moon for their Easter day, instead of the Sunday after—the fourteenth instead of the twenty-first. It would have taken a good deal more science and knowledge than these Welsh were likely to possess to understand the merits of the case; and when the stranger, in his flowing Latin, his native tongue, proceeded to mention the duty of joining to teach the heathen around, Dunawd, the Abbot of Bangor Iscoed, replied, 'That he did not think it worthy to preach to the cruel people who had treacherously slain their parents, and seized their lands.'

The further claim to their obedience was not likely to be accepted, and argument ran high. It is then related in Bede's history that Augustine appealed to God for a sign which held the truth. A blind Saxon was brought forward—the British clergy failed to heal him, but at the prayer of Augustine, he received his sight. It is suspected that this is a tradition accepted by Bede from the monks of Canterbury when he wrote a century later, for it is not very consistent with the rest of the account.

Seven Bishops from Cambria, North and South, with various abbots, agreed to hold a second conference with Augustine. On their way, they went to consult a hermit of great reputation on the manner in which they should accept the Archbishop of the English.

'If he be a man of God, follow him,' said the hermit.

'How can we tell whether he be?'

'By the test of humility,' said the hermit. 'Let him arrive first at the place of meeting. If he rise to receive you, he is the servant of Christ: listen to him as such. If he show that he scorns you by sitting still in his place, you that are the more numerous, accept him not, but despise him in your turn.'

Unfortunately, Augustine never guessed how much depended on his position, but rather his Roman breeding inclined him to manifest the dignity of his office, and by remaining seated, he instantly roused the spirit of opposition. He told them to give up two customs that isolated them from the Universal Church, to conform to the general mode of baptism, and to keep the Paschal feast at the same time as the rest of the Church. If they would do this, and join in the missions to the heathen, their other peculiar habits should be passed over.

He must have felt himself yielding much, but to the British clergy he seemed to be yielding nothing. 'If he is thus overbearing now,' they said to one another, 'what will he be if we grant him the rule over us?'

So their ultimatum was loudly pronounced. 'We will do none of these things, neither will we have you for our Archbishop.'

In grief and anger, Augustine exclaimed—

'If ye will not have peace with brethren, ye will have war with foes. If ye will not preach the way of life to the English, ye will have death from English hands.'

About nine years after, Ethelfrith the Fierce of Northumbria, the bitter foe of Christianity, who had overthrown the Scots of Dalriada, made a raid against the northern Cambrians, and besieged the City of the Legions, now Chester. The Prince of Powys, Brocmael, came to the rescue, and brought with him 1200 monks of Bangor Iscoed, who had come to him partly for protection, partly to pray for victory. As soon as Ethelfrith saw them, standing apart from the army on a slope of the hill, he cried out that they were fighting against him by their curses, bade his men begin by rushing on them, and committed such a massacre that only fifty escaped, and the monastery was entirely desolated.

Pious ancient Saxons saw Augustine's prophecy fulfilled, scoffing moderns have accused him of inciting the savage act, overlooking that he had not the slightest connection with the Angles of Northumbria, and moreover had been four or five years in his grave at Canterbury.

Before his death, Augustine had been able to consecrate Mellitus to the Bishopric of London, then part of the East Saxon kingdom ruled by Sigebert, sister's son to Ethelbert. The foundation of St. Paul's was laid in 604.

Rochester followed, and Justus was consecrated to the bishopric. One more consecration followed, though against the canons, namely of Laurence, as Augustine's own successor.

Augustine died in the last week of May, 605, and his body was laid for the time outside the unfinished church of St. Peter and St. Paul. He had done his work as a devout and faithful instrument, though it was not of his own choosing, and was wrought from obedience rather than zeal, but he had effected all that could be looked for in a man of his calibre. He had gathered many converts, founded three bishoprics, won over two kings, and commenced that round of worship that has never been dropped amid our race. The collects of the sacramentary of Gregory have been the voice of our Church, in common with all the West, for the last thirteen hundred years.

Bertha had been dead some years, and her place was filled by a second wife, and as soon as the church was consecrated, her coffin, that of her first chaplain, Liudhard, and that of Augustine, were placed in the north porch of the new church.

The consecration service began like our own, first with the blessing of peace, and then with a procession, chanting the twenty-fourth Psalm. 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in,' had been David's consecration prayer. It was again associated with the Ascension, and has commenced the dedication of hundreds of thousands of Christian churches.

Laurentius made an attempt at union with the Celtic Church. He was shocked by an Irish Bishop Dagan, who would not eat even in the same house with the clergy at Canterbury, on his way home from France, telling them that the great Abbot Columbanus observed the Celtic rule in his Burgundian monasteries.

Laurentius wrote to the lords, bishops, and abbots throughout Scotland, meaning Ireland, entreating for unity, but in vain.

However, Irish pilgrims from Munster were visiting Rome, and becoming convinced that their cycle was untenable, Laserian, Abbot of Leighlin, had been ordained priest by Gregory the Great, and some thirty years later, he was sent by Pope Honorius to endeavour to bring the Irish into accordance with the rest of the Christian world.

A synod was convened to hear him, when his most active opponent was Fintan, Abbot of Taghmon near Wexford, who entirely hated everything foreign. He offered Laserian the choice of three ordeals to prove which was the right. Either two books of the Celtic or the Roman order should be cast into the flames, and the one unburnt should be the conqueror, or the same test should be applied to two monks in a house on fire, or the two disputants should each try to raise a dead monk to life. Some centuries later, the Roman and Spanish liturgies were submitted to the same proof, and that of the monks was actually proposed in the case of Savonarola. Laserian, however, declined, on the plea that Fintan was so holy, that if he prayed that the cliffs of Slieve Margy should change places with the field on which they stood, the request would be granted.

It showed a curious Irish notion that in 'showing the right,' more would depend on the comparative favour of the rivals than on the justice of the cause.

However, Munster was inclined to yield, though Ulster, and with it Wales, Scotland and Ireland, still continued in opposition. Laurence meanwhile had troubles nearer home. Ethelbert, who had exercised so much influence as King of Kent and as Bretwalda, after a reign of fifty-six years, died in February, 616. His son Eadbald seems never to have been a Christian, and he followed a custom of the old Teutonic nations, that the new king should marry his predecessor's widow if she were not his mother. All such Kentishmen as had only become outward Christians to follow the example of their king, fell away; and in London, Mellitus was in the like distress. The Christian Sigebert was just dead, and his three heathen sons marched into church during a Celebration, exclaiming, 'Give us that white bread that you gave our father and you still give the people.'

Mellitus dauntlessly answered, 'If ye will be washed in the font of Salvation in which your father was washed, ye may partake of the holy Bread as he did. But if ye will not have the water of life ye cannot receive the Bread of Life.'

The young savages replied, 'No font for us, we need it not, but we will have that Bread.'

He tried to argue, but they declared that if he would not please them in this matter, they would not have him in their kingdom. He was expelled. London—so far as it was Saxon—fell back to Woden and Thor, and he went to consult the Archbishop. Justus joined them from Rochester, and, fainting in heart, they decided on giving up the mission and returning to Rome. 'Better,' they said, 'to return to Italy, and serve God in freedom, than to stay among these barbarians where we can do nothing.'

Mellitus and Justus started on their journey, but Laurence delayed, and had time to bethink himself of Gregory and his exhortations, and to feel ashamed and grieved at his own want of faith and zeal.

On the last night that he intended to remain in England, he had his bed of straw spread by Augustine's grave in the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul. There he went through an experience which was probably one of those half-waking dreams that are spiritual realities. St. Peter himself appeared to him, and upbraided him with forsaking his sheep—nay, proceeded to scourge him soundly, and send him back to his duty. Laurence visited Eadbald the next morning, told him of the vision, and as the monks related to Bede, showed the marks of the blows. At any rate, Eadbald was sufficiently impressed to repent heartily, and overthrow his idols, giving hearty support to the Church. It was, however, a year before Justus and Mellitus made up their minds to return to the life of toil and danger among the barbarians, and then, though Justus was restored at Rochester, Eadbald had no power in London to bring back Mellitus. The young kings were indeed killed in battle with the West Saxons, but Sigebert their successor did not recall the bishop—the people preferred their idol worship, and for forty years London was lost to the faith.

Altogether this mission from Rome was only moderately successful. It contained no one—except perhaps Paulinus—of large mind or very burning zeal. Augustine and his companions were good devout men, did their duty according to their lights, and obeyed and endured, but they had no originality or adaptability, and though they did their best, that best was not of a very high order of merit. Yet second-rate work is not to be despised. It lays foundations, and far more may arise upon it, and it moreover keeps up continuity, and connection—above all, it saves souls.

SKETCHES OF OLD NORSE LITERATURE.

IV.

THE FIRST WRITERS, AND THE BOOK OF THE SETTLEMENT OF ICELAND.

The art of writing was slow of development in the North. Probably the runes, though practically only used for inscriptions and memoranda, yet by supplying immediate wants delayed its introduction. We hear of English handwriting in the eleventh century, showing it was brought from England, probably by Churchmen who studied abroad before settling down in Norway or Iceland. Christian priests at this date occupied the lands, and something of the position of the old *godi*, or heathen magistrate-priests, and monasteries and nunneries were founded.

St. Olaf was slain A.D. 1030, Sighvat the Skald died in 1048, and about twenty years later we come to the date of the birth of the first four writers in Iceland: Ari, the historian, Sæmund Sigfusson of Oddé, the scholar educated abroad—both priests; Kolskegg Asbiornson, called the Wise, Ari's fellow-worker; and Thorodd, the grammarian. Of these far the most important was Ari, the author of several books, a word employed in Icelandic for the first time as distinguished from Sagas and poems. These were, 'Islendingabók (Iceland's Book), 'Landnámabók' (Land Settlement Book), and 'Konungabók' (Book of the Kings). The Skalds were still composing and reciting their historical poems; the *Sayers* were still saying Sagas; the old traditionary learning was at its fullest and richest when these men appeared just in time to save some of it. We shall have to return to our story of both Song and Saga, after having noticed the manner in which they are handed down to us, and the value of the record. To avoid confusion it seems best to consider these points now when the two streams of tradition and writing were flowing for awhile side by side.

Scandinavia can hardly be said to have a history before the middle of the eighth century, only the impression of a progress from the East led by shadowy heroes and heroines, sometimes viewed as ancestors, sometimes as divinities; and dim traditions of tribal war. There are various* spurious histories of real personages written in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, purporting to tell of earlier times, as Ragnar Lodbrog's Saga, Frithiolf's Saga, Hervor's Saga, etc. But except in what they owe to Ari and the old poems, they are only historical romances. Ari's works, and some surviving fragments of a lost chronicle of the Kings of Denmark ('Skjoldunga'), are the authorities on which other historians have built.

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* Several are quoted in Du Chaillu's recent book, apparently as if they were historical authorities.

Ari Thorgilsson, called the learned (*frodi*), was born in the West of Iceland in 1067—the year after the Norman Conquest. He was descended from some of the best families in Iceland, who now could count four or five generations since their emigration thither. His father Thorgils was drowned when he was a young child, so he was sent from the family estates, which were inherited by his brother, to be fostered by Hall of the Side, chief of an Eastern district; here he lived fourteen years, till the death of Hall at the age of ninety-four. Snorri Sturlason's preface to the 'Book of Kings' says, 'Hall was a man of good parts and clear memory; he could remember priest Thangbrand baptizing him when he was but three years old. He was a very distinguished man, and had been much abroad. He was for some time a partner in trade with King Olaf the Saint.' Others, he mentions, who taught Ari much of former events, including the 'Lady Thurid,' a woman of good understanding, 'so that it was not wonderful that Ari should be so truly informed of what had happened in old days, both here and abroad; for he had gathered his knowledge from old and wise men, and he himself was always eager to learn, and a man of good memory.'

The population in Iceland was small and concentrated, consisting chiefly of families proud of their ancestry, and, as in Norway also, jealously preserving their family records often in rhymed genealogies of great antiquity. These *ætartal* (*family counts*) were the more valuable because the *Odal* tenure of the land entailed it strictly on the so-called *Odal* born, or those in the line of succession from the first holder of it. The Icelanders were, as we have said, great wanderers, often returning to spend a long old age in their old homes, and to transmit the lore they had gathered to their children.

'Somewhat I have written,' says Ari, 'that is found in the genealogies wherein kings and other men of great race have drawn up their family relationship. And somewhat is written according to old traditions or poems.'

The last paper said something of the great store of recited historical poems that was open to Ari; but it should here be noticed that it is evident that he had a much better version of many of them than is now extant. Often the extracts from old poems interspersed in the prose Chronicles, introduced by—'so says Thiodolf'—or whoever the Skald may be, do not convey the full meaning of the prose. Careful examination shows, the scholars tell us, that many of the old poems are in the condition of old pictures that have been overpainted by some later hand. The changes are in the direction of euphonious jingle in which proper names and plain facts are lost; some one has so improved or spoilt many verses that sense is lost in sound; though often underneath slight alterations in words and phrases, the old meaning which guided Ari, has been rediscovered. 'Smooth vapid phrases which tell us nothing new are substituted for the rougher original lines which once bristled with hard facts,' says Vigfusson. And he gives various examples which require some knowledge of Icelandic to follow.

This falsification is found more or less in verses from A.D. 970 to 1070, when it stops; and for various reasons, Vigfusson suspects that a poet of the twelfth century, Einar Skulason, a master of metre, but a man of few ideas, was the author of these unfortunate restorations, after the manner of Bishop Percy polishing up our old ballads to suit modern taste. All this points to the conclusion that the early King's lives were essentially Ari's work, founded on contemporary documents as well as living tradition.

There is an idea afloat that the Norse Chronicles are more entertaining than reliable, in fact, too good and brilliant to be true, and various errors in date, both in them and in historical Sagas, have been quoted to support that opinion. Ari first attempted to put this vague past history into chronological order; a difficult matter, as he seems to have had access to few books, and calculations by the Christian era were very unfamiliar long after his time. He calculates back to the year 870.

Now the date of the fall of St. Olaf (1030) is certain, it is marked by an eclipse. The date of the great famine in 976 is also known, and from that date, Ari's chronology may be depended on. Before that period he calculates back chiefly by the duration of the lives of the law speakers in Iceland, and of the Kings in Norway to 870; the date, he says, of the martyrdom of St. Edmund in England, the discovery of Iceland, and the beginning of the reign of Harald Fair-hair in Norway. And here a discrepancy of thirty years may be discovered by independent lines of evidence, one being the carefully-preserved family genealogies in Iceland and Norway.

As he calculates farther back, beyond the memories of the predecessors of his contemporaries, he allows too much time, both for the settled period of Iceland and for the reigns of Harald Fair-hair and his sons. But allowing that he antedated the settlement of Iceland and Harald's reign by thirty years, the dates in his own writings and also those in many other Sagas, which take their chronology from him, all fall into their right places in other records.

In that case Iceland has celebrated her millenary thirty years too soon, and it is yet to come. Also we need not hastily discredit the trustworthiness of the histories because of some error in the dates. Ari, indeed, was a careful and critical writer, truthfulness being the distinguishing quality of his works; he had not even the usual easy credence of his time in marvels and miracles. His style alone makes him pleasant reading, the terse and clear Icelandic prose seems to have sprung into the world like Minerva, mature and equipped and ready for anything. His 'Book of the Kings' is the foundation of Snorri Sturlason's great history. The Book of Iceland ('Islendingabók') is chiefly lost, unless a good deal is preserved in the Settlement Book (Landnámabók). This is a complete and original record of singular interest, of the making of Iceland, on which we should pause for awhile.

'Landnámabók' was written before 1130, and deals, roughly speaking, with the years from 900 to 1030, though the genealogies are carried down to Ari's own date. The story of these years in other lands is brief and obscure, the great events of history loom but dimly out of the darkness. Only on Iceland falls a full clear light, which shows all these distinctly. We know the names and ways of the dwellers in all parts of the land, whence they came, what they did, who they married; we know even about their horses and ships and markets, as well as their wars and adventures. The book begins with an account of the discovery of Iceland, and goes on to tell of the persons who settled there, describing the country, and giving careful notes of the boundaries of estates. Beginning with the south-east, he goes regularly round the island, and to this day he is a good geographical authority as regards configuration of land and rivers, lava explosions, and earthquakes. His short biographical notices set real men and women before us, and let in many a curious side-light on life as it then was. Four thousand proper names are recorded, one-third of these being women, who held a higher position in the North than elsewhere in Europe—or, indeed, than they did in Scandinavia also in later times. He gives names of places, most of which are still unchanged—and history, biography, and Saga, are more or less built on his foundation.

Landnáma is good credible history; here and there only there is a touch of the marvellous in the brief sketches. The mysterious island sought in those days of uncertain navigation by many who could not find it, with its huge ice-capped mountains rising out of the ocean waves, and its wonders of vapour and fire, evidently excited the imagination of the first settlers. They might find, on weathering some stormy point, long reaches of inland seas running up valleys, where the warm volcanic soil made the grasses and aromatic plants grow rich and strong for the cattle they brought from Norway.

There was a law to compel the shipmen to take the threatening dragon-heads off their ships before entering a haven, for fear they might scare away the shy guardian spirits who to their fancy haunted these solitudes. The settler who landed his crew on the coast where the lands were unoccupied, would claim for himself the land he could 'circle with fire' in a day, that is, ride round with a lighted torch between sunrise and sunset. Or he would buy land from an earlier settler, or receive it as a gift from a superior. The summer would pass for those at home, as now in pastoral work and fishing, the long winter nights would be lit by splendid auroras and not seldom by the glimmer of volcanic fires. On one side would lie the sea or some great river; on the other the waste land, the desert interior of Iceland, to this day in great part unexplored. What wild things might not haunt the unknown region on whose border they lived; elves were there no doubt, and homeless ghosts, and creatures partly human, but with some evil strain of more than human strength and malice—half-trolls—and vampires, of which strange tales are told to this day.

A few short extracts from 'Landnámabók' may give some idea of it. The family histories generally begin before the emigration to Iceland, as in this story of the men of Vatzdale.

'Ketill was a noble Hersir* in Raumsdal in Norway . . . (follows his pedigree). He married Mjöll, daughter of Arne, *bogsveigis*.† Thorstein was their son, he who, at the instigation of his father, slew in the upland forest Jokull, the outlaw son of Ingemund, Earl of Gautland. Jokull gave him his life, and afterwards Thorstein married Thordisa, his sister. Their son was Ingemund the Old; he was born at Hefni in Halogaland, where lived Thori, father of Grim and Hromund. A heathen Sibyl foretold that they should all settle in an unexplored land over the western sea. Ingemund asked how that should come about. The Sibyl gave as a token that he should lose a talisman figure of Frey out of his purse, and find it where he dug foundations for his high-seat pillars in that land. Ingemund was a great Viking, and harried ever in the West Viking. Sæmund was his comrade, from the Soder Isles. They returned from a foray just when King Harald Fair-hair took Norway and fought the battle of Hafrafjord with Thorir Hawk; Ingemund wished to support the King and Sæmund not, so they parted. After the battle the King married Ingemund to Vigdis, daughter of Earl Thorir the Silent; but he could settle nowhere, and the King urged him to follow his fate to Iceland. He had no mind to do that, yet he sent two Finns on a wizard journey‡ to find his talisman Frey made in silver. The Finns returned and had seen the thing; they told Ingemund of a dale between two holts, and described all the lie of the land where it was fated he should settle. Then he prepared for his journey to Iceland with . . . (several people are named). They touched land at the south, and were all winter at Hvameyri with Grimur, Ingemund's foster-brother, and in spring they travelled north over the waste land. They came to a fjord, where they found two rams, and named it Hruta-fjord (*ramfiord*). They went north over the district and gave names everywhere. They wintered in Hittadal, and saw thence snowless hills to the south-east, and went there in spring; there Ingemund recognised the land that he had been told of; he took all Vatzdale to the east, and lived at Hof, and found his talisman where he dug to place the pillars of the house.' It is next told where his followers settled. Later 'Ingemund found a white she bear and two cubs at Húnavatni (*cub*-lake), and then he sailed abroad and gave the beasts to King Harald. People in Norway had not before seen white bears. Harald gave him a ship with a cargo of wood, and he sailed with two ships, they were the first men to round Skag Point and brought up in Húnavatn.' More details about his followers are told, and how Ingemund lost ten swine, and found next autumn a hundred in a solitary valley, 'now called *Svinadal*. The boar was called Beigardr, he ran into the lake *Svinavatu*, swam across to the cliff, and broke his wind at *Beigardahval*.' Ingemund's end illustrates the Norse fidelity to companions in arms. Hrolleif, the nephew of his old comrade Sæmund, having been turned out of his district for man-slaying, Ingemund, now old and blind, gave him land near his own, across the river. Word was brought to him one day that the turbulent outlaw was quarrelling with his sons over the fishing. Ingemund mounted his horse, which was led by a page, and rode down to the river to separate the young men; but as he turned back homewards, Hrolleif cast a spear which wounded the old man mortally. He returned home, told no one, but despatched the page to warn Hrolleif to escape before his sons discovered his death, and then sat down quietly on his high-seat to die. When his sons came home at night, they wondered to see him so pale and still, and then found he had died of his untended wound, but saved for a time, the life of his slayer—his old comrade's nephew. Thus the fine pastoral district of Vatzdale was settled, and named by the names we find to this day.

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* Gentleman next in rank to an Earl.

† Bow-swayer.

‡ They were supposed to leave their bodies in a trance, while their spirits visited distant place in a Hamför, or journey in a changed form.

We may select almost at hazard the settlement history of another typical district in the south of Iceland, where a narrow space of grass land lies between the mountains and the sea. Nothing can be a greater contrast to Vatzdale. To the north the fire-scarred hills rise high, skirted by broken glaciers; to the south is a wide stretch of sea. A great turbid river breaks from the blue ice crags, and rushes in whirling rapids to the sea. Large stones are knocking and grinding as they are hurled down by the muddy waves, and a foul smell of decomposing sulphurets and phosphates fills the air, so that now, as in Ari's time, it is called *Fullisà*, or the fetid river. At times, as in several other wild glacier streams, some collapse of the glacier liberates a rush of accumulated water, and causes a sudden furious inundation which is a real danger to travellers, who have to ride what is seldom an easy ford.

'Lodmundr the Old,' says Landnàma, 'and Biólfr, his foster-brother, went to Iceland from Vors in Thuluness. Lodmundr was strong in magic, and a wizard; he flung overboard the pillars of his high-seat and said he thought to settle where they drifted ashore.

The foster-brothers landed in the east country and took Lodmundar fjord, where they lived the first winter; then he heard of his pillars being in the south land. He laded a ship with all his goods, and, when the sail was spread, he laid down and bade no one be so bold as to call him. When he hád lain awhile there was a terrible crash, then men saw that a great landslip had slid down on the dwelling where he had lived; then he sat up and said: "It is my foreboding that the ship shall never come safe from sea which sails out hence." He then held south and west till he took that land where the pillars had come ashore, between Skog river and Fetid river that is now called glacier river of Solheima, and divides the south from the east quarter of the land. When Lodmundr was old, Thrasi, who was also a wizard, came to live at Skog, across the river. One morning Thrasi saw a great flood in the river, and with his spells he turned it east, towards Solheima. A thrall of Lodmundr saw it and cried that the sea was sweeping over the land from the north. Lodmundr was now blind, but told the thrall to bring him in the bucket some of that which he called the sea. When he brought it, Lodmundr said, "I do not call that sea." He made the thrall lead him into the water, and drove his staff in, and the water began to rush westward, towards Skog.' Finally tho two wizards agreed that the river should spoil neither side, but flow in a certain shallow ravine, as it does to this day. The story illustrates the restraint and essential truthfulness of Ari's narrative, even when touched by the superstitions of the day. Kolskegg was Ari's assistant in the history of the settlements in Eastern Iceland, of which he was a native.

Sæmund the Wise, the other contemporary author whom Ari says he consulted, wrote in Latin, and his books are lost, except in so far as they assisted later writers. Probably owing to his learning, he shared with Virgil, in the middle ages, the reputation of being a great wizard. He certainly studied abroad, and the earliest version of the life of John, the sainted Bishop of Holar, tells, probably with truth, that he met Sæmund in the south, and persuaded him to return in his company to Iceland; but the second version, of the thirteenth century, says that Sæmund had learnt the black art, but forgotten his own baptismal name till the holy John recognised him, told him his name, brought him home, and made him priest of Oddè. This escape was afterwards expanded into a wild tale of sorcery. Another legend tells how Sæmund and other pupils in the black art spent years in an underground cave near Paris, or some say Padua. No daylight ever penetrated there, but they studied books with letters of fire. They paid no fees save that when they had graduated and were free to leave the caverns, the fiend who taught them claimed the last as his prey. Sæmund went out last of the graduates of his year, and the demon clutched at him. 'I am not the last,' said Sæmund; 'don't you see the one behind me?' and he pointed to his shadow, which the blundering demon seized; but ever after, like the Lady of Branksholm's father—

> 'His form no darkening shadow traced
> Upon the sunlit wall.'

It is a pity that these wild legends, and in later times his supposed connection with the Elder Edda, should have made Sæmund's memory confused, for unquestionably he was a very learned and distinguished man. Though a priest, he was married, and founded the great Oddverja family. Many years after Snorri Sturlason, the historian, was fostered by Jon Loptsson, Sæmund's grandson, and lived at Oddè for fifteen years. No doubt he then had access to writings of the elder historian, now lost.

It is remarkable that at this early date the then modern Icelandic language should be analysed by a philosophical grammarian, for such was Thorodd, probably the earliest Teutonic grammarian. He was the architect of the timber cathedral of Holar, and the best craftsman in Iceland; and it is said that while it was building, he attended the bishop's school for the teaching of grammar to such good purpose that he excelled in it as much as in architecture. Like Max Müller many hundred years later, he held the opinion that various languages branched from one common stem. These four authors we have been considering mark the beginning of the writing age, or of literature proper, in Scandinavia.

AN ADVENTURE WITH BRIGANDS SIXTY YEARS AGO.

CHAPTER I.

The story which I am going to relate is a true story. It is part of the experiences of General Church. During the first quarter of this century, he was sent on a special mission to Apulia by the Neapolitan Government. Apulia was at that time infested by brigands, and King Ferdinand of Naples and his Government were at their wits' end what to do. So the King gave to this English officer the title of 'Alter Ego,' which conferred upon him, in Apulia, equal authority with the King himself—absolute, unquestioned, irresponsible authority—power to condemn brigands to death without any form of trial.

Not that General Church ever made use of this power—he particularly mentions, in his account of this period of his life, that he never condemned even the worst of brigands without a fair trial.

Well then, let us picture our General on his way from Otranto to Naples, travelling with post-horses, but in his own carriage, accompanied only by his servant Raphael, and his Aide-de-camp, Captain Quandel—a young Swiss in the service of the King of Naples, a brave, cheery, ready-witted fellow. It was 10 o'clock at night when they alighted at an old palazzo on the outskirts of Cerignola, and were hospitably received by the padrone, an old Don Girolamo, who ushered them across a large courtyard, shut in by huge, highly ornamented, rusty gates, to his house. The General tells us that from the front door a flight of broad stone steps led to the first floor landing, from which opened a suite of immense rooms, adorned with old armour and family portraits, and lighted by several high, narrow, iron-barred windows. They were evidently expected, for a fire blazed in the huge grate, and several wax tapers shed their cheerful light on the dark old walls—a pleasant sight on a chilly, stormy night, to the travellers; while the old padrone, excusing himself for the non-appearance of the supper, left them, promising to hasten preparations, and return immediately.

'How is your appetite, Quandel?' asked the General, as he warmed his hands at the cheerful blaze. 'Supper will be ready soon, I trust—but what's the matter?' for the young Aide-de-camp, who had been seeing to the unpacking of the carriage, wore a perplexed and troubled aspect, as, shutting the door carefully behind him, he approached his chief. 'Mon Général,' said the young man, 'it's all very fine to talk about supper. I doubt if we shall have much time for supper! We are likely to have visitors whom we don't want—in fact, the Vardarelli are in the neighbourhood.' 'The rascals!' exclaimed the General. 'My good fellow, where did you pick up that piece of information?' Thereupon, Quandel told how, when he paid the postillions—giving them, as was the General's fashion, a liberal 'buena mano'—he had overheard one mutter to the other something about the Vardarelli, and the pity it would be if so kind a gentleman should fall into their hands; whereupon the quick-witted young officer called the men back, and said, 'Look here, my friends, I've made a mistake in the dark, I find. I gave you only ten carlini, and the General bade me give you twenty. Here, take them, and drink his Excellency's health. You may be sure he will give you a good character, and when we come back this way you may look out for just such another buena mano.'

The postillions looked at each other, hesitated, peered round in the darkness to be sure there were no listeners, then, as they took the money and thanked the gentleman, one of them whispered, 'I heard at the last station that Don Gaetano Vardarelli and his band were hereabouts. It would be a pity they should come across the General—he is truly a galant'uomo, and we should be sorry if he fell into their clutches. Take the warning, Signor, and good-night,' and they mounted and rode off.

Here was a pleasant predicament for the travellers! It is true that they were armed, but their force consisted only of their two selves and one servant, and they were in a lonely, defenceless house, and could expect no assistance from the poor old proprietor. The General twisted his moustache, and asked, 'What are we to do?' The Aide-de-camp shook his head and shrugged his shoulders, but had no suggestion to offer. 'We are but three, General,' he said ruefully, 'and we have but three pair of pistols. All the doors of this confounded old house are rotten, and as to the staircase, why, it's as wide as the one in the King's palace—no hope of defending that!' Just then the door was pushed open, and old Don Girolamo entered cheerful and garrulous, ushering in, with many complimentary phrases, the Sindaco or Chief Magistrate of the neighbouring town of Cerignola; then followed the usual exchange of amenities and introductions, after which the Sindaco requested to have a few words in private with his Excellency, and the other two gentlemen withdrew. As soon as they had left the room, the poor magistrate threw up his hands with a gesture of despair and gasped out, 'Eccellenza, we are lost! we are all lost, we are all dead men! The Vardarelli are in the town—over a hundred of them, Eccellenza, in Cerignola! And there are no troops; all the troops are hunting for the brigands somewhere else. O Signore Generale, what are we to do?'

It was lucky for our General that he had had some warning of this unpleasant state of affairs. It enabled him to show no signs of dismay or surprise, but to answer cheerfully, 'How kind of you to come and tell me this, Signor Sindaco! I am so anxious to see these Vardarelli, and I really did not feel sure where they were to be found. Gaetano and his band are not such bad fellows, and by no means unpopular in this neighbourhood, eh, Signor?' and he looked the Sindaco full in the face with a meaning air.

The fact was that, though the General knew nothing whatever about his visitor, he knew full well that the brigands were supreme all through the country, and that the people were forced to make a league with them and pay them tribute to ensure their own safety; and he felt not the slightest doubt that the worthy Sindaco had taken care, for his own sake, to be on the best of terms with the powerful chief of the Vardarelli. It was an ugly business, and he must get out of it as best he could, so, taking a sudden determination to try what audacity would do, our General calmly desired the astonished Sindaco to go straight back, and desire the brigand Chief to present himself and his band to the English General, who much desired the honour of their closer acquaintance.

The poor gentleman remonstrated piteously, declared that he was lost, that he was a dead man, that he should infallibly be murdered by those rascals—in vain! He was met by a short, stern, 'Do what I command you, Signor Sindaco, and do it without delay. This will not be your first interview with Don Gaetano Vardarelli, I'll be bound!' 'It is true, your Excellency,' answered the poor man, 'that I have just spoken to him—but only for a moment—only——' 'That will do,' was the curt reply. 'Here—Quandel!' and in five minutes' time an order was written by the Aide-de-camp, and signed by the General, desiring Don Gaetano Vardarelli to come immediately and present himself and his troop to his Excellency General Church. The order was then handed to the Sindaco, with the remark, 'As you have paid one visit to these gentlemen on your own account, you can have no objection to paying them another on mine, and you can tell the Chief that I have come here with the friendliest feelings towards him—in fact, my coming here at all proves it. Don't delay a moment in delivering this order.' The Sindaco made his bow, and a very low bow it was, and departed on his errand.

CHAPTER II.

'Now, Quandel,' said the General, when he and his Aide-de-camp were left alone, 'we have no time to lose. We have to see if this Tragedy can be turned into a Comedy! I will tell you exactly what to do, and if we are lucky in our first deal we may win the game. Put on your uniform and your sword. Tell Raphael to stand at the head of the stairs, and do you take your stand in the ante-room, next to the supper-room.' (The supper-room was the centre room of a suite of three of which the one where they were conversing was the third, and the ante-room the first.) 'Tell Raphael to treat these rascals civilly, but to keep them on the landing while he summons you. Then you must keep them in the ante-room while you announce their coming to me. Be good-humoured, but don't allow any familiarity. Let the Chief understand that we feel the most perfect confidence in him, and are delighted to see him. When you come to me tap gently, and don't be in a hurry to tap again if I should not answer you directly. Of all things don't seem hurried or fluttered—that would ruin us—and bring only the Chief to me. Let the others wait outside, don't ask any one to sit down, or sit down yourself; don't let anything on the supper table be touched—wine might lead to quarrelling, and a dispute would be fatal. Keep up an air of official dignity, and if you find the scoundrels more than you can manage, retreat in good order upon me and leave me to manage matters. We have our swords and pistols, and if the worst comes to the worst, we will sell our lives dearly. After all, these fellows are in straits, I fancy, and they may not be sorry to come to terms.'

Having finished his harangue, the General looked at the Aide-de-camp, and the Aide-de-camp looked at the General, and then—the comicality of the whole situation, the foolishness of having put their heads into such a trap, was really too much for them! They burst out laughing, a regular fit of laughter, much to the delight of old Don Girolamo, who at that moment opened the door, cheerily announcing, 'It is late, your Excellency, and the macaroni and fried fish are ready—and capers—we are famous for capers—and mushrooms, your Excellency knows we are famous for mushrooms—a tavola, a tavola!' and he seized the General's hand to lead him into the next room, where the supper table was laid with many kinds of fish, fruit, poultry, besides macaroni and the famous mushrooms and capers.

But alas! for the hungry travellers! Just when the old padrone had warned them that his wine was a *little* strong and fiery—just when he had tucked his white napkin under his chin, and had brandished a huge silver spoon wherewith to help the macaroni—the tramp of horses was heard in the courtyard below. Don Girolamo turned pale and dropped the spoon. 'We are lost,' he gasped. 'I am a dead man! Excuse me, General. May God preserve your Excellency; I must conceal myself,' and in the twinkling of an eye he had disappeared to some secure lurking-place.

In another moment the Sindaco entered to announce that he had done the General's bidding; but the worthy man could not be persuaded to do more than just enter the room, announce the fact, wish his Excellency 'felice notte,' and so departed, glad, doubtless, to be well out of the scrape.

It was now drawing towards midnight, and a horrible night it was, with thunder and lightning and torrents of rain. The old padrone and his servant were nowhere to be seen, so the General, Quandel, and Raphael took up their appointed positions, and waited the coming of their visitors. They came, some remaining outside on horseback to guard the gates, while the others, some fifty or sixty in number, headed by their Chief, entered the great door, and, firelook in hand, cautiously ascended the wide staircase. On the landing they were met by Raphael, who, poor fellow, was in great trepidation.

The General tells us that talking was much more in Raphael's line than fighting, but that he had the most absolute faith in his master's good luck, and on this occasion he seems to have taken his courage by both hands, and played his part of the Comedy extremely well.

With the utmost politeness he barred Don Gaetano's way as he ascended the landing, and requested the Signor Capitano to remain there a minute while his arrival was announced to his Excellency the General. Don Gaetano, with equal politeness, assented, and saying, 'You will understand, Signor Cameriere, that, with all possible respect for his Excellency, prudence requires us to keep our eyes open,' he sent some of his men upstairs to reconnoitre the upper storey, while others took up their station on the landing. A wild-looking, picturesque set of fellows they were, all dressed in velveteen jerkins, much adorned with braid and buttons, steeple-crowned hats, and belts stuck full of pistols and daggers; also, every one had a sabre at his side, and carried in his hand firelock, or carbine, or rifle.

The General heard afterwards that the brigands were thoroughly puzzled and astonished by his bold move, that they were already inclined to come to terms with the Government, and that, after holding a council of war, they determined to accept his invitation, but to come in full force, well-armed, and taking precautions in case of treachery. But to go on with our story.

Captain Quandel, at Raphael's summons, came forth to receive the brigand Chief, saying, 'Enter, Don Gaetano, but be good enough to remain here, in the ante-room, while I inform his Excellency of your arrival.' 'And my officers, Signor?' 'With pleasure, Don Gaetano.' So four tall fellows accompanied their Chief, and remained with him in the ante-room, while Quandel crossed the supper-room, and knocked gently at the General's door. Receiving no answer, after a pause, he knocked again. 'Who is there?' 'C'est moi, Excellence.' 'Who is there?'—repeated impatiently; and in a louder voice the Aide-de-Camp replied, 'C'est moi, Excellence, Quandel.' 'Oh, Quandel, enter,' and he entered, closing the door behind him. A few rapid sentences sufficed to tell the General that the brigands had taken possession of the whole house, that they were in full force, and armed to the teeth, but that their behaviour was good-humoured and respectful; and with a direction from the General to send in Don Gaetano alone, Quandel returned to the Chief, who at first demurred to this, but finally said, 'Let us go, Signor. The General is galant-'uomo,' and they went in together.

It must have been a curious scene! The huge, lofty chamber, with its wax candles flashing back dim reflections from the old armour hanging on the walls, or half lighting up some old portrait of grim warrior or stately dame; the great chimney-piece where the burning logs blazed and spluttered; the spare, erect figure of the Englishman, with his sharp features, and keen, dark-blue eyes, shaded by thick black eyebrows; and dressed in his uniform with his sword by his side, and a pair of good English pistols loaded within reach of his hand, as he stood by the mantel-shelf; and the brigand Chief, a splendid figure in his picturesque costume and handsome arms, holding in one hand his tall plumed hat, in the other his carbine. He stepped briskly forward with a little flourish. 'Here I am, your Excellency. I am Don Gaetano, the famous Chief of the Vardarelli, at your orders, General!' The two men surveyed each other curiously, as the General returned the salutation, and said, 'Delighted to make your acquaintance, Don Gaetano. I hear of you everywhere, a brave and humane man. I wish to do you a good turn, only you must alter your way of fighting. What shall I say about you to the King?' The brigand Chief drew himself up. 'Your Excellency is too good; I have nothing to ask for. I don't know whom your Excellency calls the King. Am not I King of Apulia? Have I not beaten three royal generals? The flocks of Apulia are mine, the people own my sway, I can help myself to the travellers' purses, all the nobles of the province hold me in awe. Your Excellency knows that Ferdinand can do nothing against me,' and he brought down the butt end of his carbine on the floor with a force that threatened damage to the old planks.

But he had met a man who was not likely to be daunted by bluster, and the General, after quietly surveying his formidable guest, replied, 'Signor Capitano, of the Vardarelli, I don't care a fig what you are, or what you are not. I know this, that you were soundly thrashed by Estorio, and by Sannito, and by Corre. Have you forgotten Altamonte? Have you forgotten Minerimno and Castel di Monte?' 'Per Santo Diavolo!' cried the Chief, 'your Excellency speaks truth. But it was a different thing with the Gendarmerie, and—I may speak frankly to your Excellency, you are an Englishman—we *were* forced to take to our heels on those occasions. But the accursed wine of this country is strong, and we had taken too much of it, and our heads belonged rather to our heels than to our hearts! I would not say so much to any one but your Excellency,' he added confidentially, 'but if it were not for myself, my brothers, my nephew, and some fifteen of my followers—all the rest of the band is good for nothing! But, your Excellency, it is time to say addio. It is late, and we have far to go.'

The General did not feel that he had made much way with his guest, besides, his curiosity was not satisfied, so he did not take the hint. 'Come, Gaetano,' he said, 'tell me something of your own history, and your own mode of life.' 'It is a long story, Signor,' answered the

Chief, 'too long to be told fasting; besides, your Excellency's patience would be tired out. It is enough to say that I was a soldier once, and that injustice drove me to this life. After all it is a better life—to gallop over the plains, and breathe the fresh air of the mountains——' 'Have you shed much blood, Gaetano?' 'By the Madonna, no, your Excellency—little, very little.' 'Then, why not make peace with the Government?' 'Well, Signor, there are difficulties—and this is a fine trade after all. One lives like a king, the great people fear us, the poor look up to us, the women adore us. We get plenty of money and spend it freely. It's not a bad thing to be accountable to nobody, and, above all law!' said Don Gaetano. The keen eyes of the General rested on the dashing figure before him, and then he said, with grave emphasis, 'As you please, Don Gaetano. If you like your trade, stick to it. I am to understand, then, that you do *not* wish me to say anything for you at Naples?' 'Why, as to that'—the Chief hesitated and looked down—'I don't say that, your Excellency. I have spoken to you frankly, and I don't mind saying that you may tell Ferdinand that I should not object to serve him—only I must keep the command of Apulia—if I were promised that, and if I engaged to serve him, I would live and die worthy of my name. But I could not come in for the sake of a pardon. Your Excellency knows that I have my enemies, and I must take care of myself. I must go armed, because of the Vendetta.' 'Take care, my friend,' answered the General, 'you will get yourself into a scrape one of these days.' 'Bah!' he answered, 'I don't care a fig for all the King's generals put together.' 'Ah, but, my friend,' said the General, laughing, '*I* may have to hunt you down myself!' 'Rather any one else, General,' with a frank smile, 'for I have a great respect for your Excellency, and should be truly sorry to fire upon you. But if such should be my fate, it will be a great honour for me, truly a great honour!' 'Come, Gaetano,' said the General, who had really taken a liking for the bold brigand, 'I advise you to submit. Are you an outlaw?' 'Holy Madonna, yes! I feel your Excellency's kindness, but 'tis no use.' 'Well, I promise you one thing,' said the General, 'a fair trial—when I catch you, and you shall not be—hanged.' 'I understand your Excellency. It is better to be shot than hanged. I shall die a soldier's death at least! I am content.' 'Keep out of my way, my friend, Don Gaetano,' cried the General, 'I beg of you, or else make your submission. It would be a real grief to me to have to carry the law into force against you, and I couldn't help it, you know. I should have no choice. So divert yourself with other places, and don't meddle with my province, if you please! My soldiers are excellent marksmen and horsemen, as you know, and if they have to put the left foot into the stirrup, it won't be child's play. Now, will you be good enough to parade your squadron for my inspection?' 'How, your Excellency, at this time of night? In this tempest!' 'Why not?' the General tranquilly replied. 'They are all here I believe, and I want to see what kind of fellows they are.' 'But your Excellency will be wet to the skin!' 'We are not made of salt or sugar, Don Gaetano, so what matters that?' 'At your commands then, General; but give me leave first to introduce my officers.' He put his fingers to his mouth and whistled, upon which a tall brigand strode into the room followed by Captain Quandel, who was alarmed at the shrill whistle, not knowing that the Chief had a different call of this kind for each of his brothers. 'I perceive,' drily remarked the General to his Aide-de-camp, 'that this tall gentleman has not learnt that it is customary to wait to be announced.' He spoke in French, but Don Gaetano understood him, and was profuse in his apologies for the breach of etiquette before he presented: 'My brother, Don Girolamo;' and after his departure, 'My brother, Don Geronimo;' and then came the favourite, 'My *dear* brother, Don Giovanni.' Handsome fellows they were, and well equipped, especially the last, who received a few extra compliments from the General, in consideration of his being the Chief's best-beloved brother. The fourth whistle brought in the most perfect young dandy and coxcomb imaginable, wearing, in addition to the brigand's velveteen jacket, a shirt collar and frill, which had the quaintest effect. His left hand too was gloved, and the right sparkled with rings. 'This is my nephew,' said Don Gaetano, with a most amusing air of gratification and complacency, as the handsome lad made his bow. 'He says he is twenty, but his mother cuts him short of that by a couple of years. What care I, when he is equally ready to lead the dance with a pretty girl or exchange shots with Ferdinand's Gendarmerie?' 'He is truly a splendid young cavalier,' answered the General with a smile; and with a few kind words, and 'Grazie, molte grazie, Signor,' from the youth, he too departed. Now our General's spirits rose higher than they had done at the beginning of this curious scene. Evidently things were going well, and he and his guest were on the most frank and friendly terms. So far, so good. Still the danger was not over; a trifle might raise the brigand's suspicions that they were being tricked, and that, he well knew, meant death to himself and his Aide-de-camp. However, he had no choice but to play the game out. So he sent for torches, and while Raphael was looking for some, requested Don Gaetano to summon his men, and then came out on the landing-place, accompanied by one of the Chief's brothers. Some fifteen stout fellows, two of them the trumpeters of the band, pulled off their high-crowned hats, and greeted him with shouts of 'Evviva, Evviva,' crowding round him rather more closely than was pleasant, and evidently wishing to attract his notice. He gave them a few good-humoured words as they all descended the staircase together, and crossed the courtyard to the gates, outside of which the men were being mustered, and ranged in line, on horseback, on the wide road, all facing the gateway. Don Gaetano stood beside the General, proudly surveying his troop; the red glare of the torches cast fitful gleams on their wild faces and their arms and accoutrements; the lightning flashed; the thunder pealed; the rain fell in torrents. Behind stood Quandel, Raphael, and the trembling old major-domo, holding the torches, and sheltering them as well as they could from the storm. A weird, strange, picturesque scene, more pleasant, one would think, in remembrance than in reality. We may be sure that the General never forgot that midnight parade!

Now Don Gaetano's favourite mare was led up, a beautiful creature, black as jet, fleet as the wind, having carried her master safe from the pursuers many and many a time, and he patted her affectionately, and looked delighted at the General's admiration; and when he said in French to Quandel, 'What a beautiful mare, and worthy of so handsome a cavalier!' and Quandel answered enthusiastically, 'Faith, General, it is a thousand pities he is not one of us!' the brigand Chief evidently heard, and smiled and bowed, as he sprang to the saddle, and gave a signal to his men. They passed before the General slowly, in single file, the trumpeters leading, and as they passed a single brigand left his place in the rank, dismounted, dropped on one knee, respectfully kissed the General's hand, and then, without a word, remounted and fell into rank again; and soon after another repeated the same manœuvre. When all had passed—one hundred in all, including the officers—Don Gaetano rode up to the General, alighted, took off his hat, and thus addressed him: 'Excellency, a little affair requires my presence at a distance, and I must now take my leave; but at any hour after daylight an escort shall be at your Excellency's orders on the road to Ordone, to conduct you safely within sight of the post-house, where you will probably find some of Ferdinand's soldiers. Also, I may assure your Excellency, that you may pass through this valley in perfect safety for some days to come.' He smiled, for well he knew that the safety of the valley depended upon the Vardarelli being engaged elsewhere.

'Thanks, Don Gaetano,' was the reply; and then in a lower tone, 'Pity that you don't alter your line of life; but I shall have a good word to say of you at Naples, depend upon it.' 'Your Excellency speaks well, and who knows? Perhaps yes—perhaps no! If the conditions please me—but Ferdinand must remember that Apulia is mine!' 'One moment,' said the General, 'who were those two men who dismounted and saluted me?' 'Austrian deserters—Tyrolese by birth. Does your Excellency desire an escort?'

'No, no, Don Gaetano. There may be troops nearer than you know of, and I should be sorry to get your fine fellows into a scrape.' 'A thousand thanks for your Excellency's consideration. Now I have thirty miles to ride before daybreak, and I shall want all my force. Allow me again to recommend myself to your Excellency, and to kiss your hand.' He kissed the General's hand, his brothers and nephew followed his example, and then with 'Addio, most excellent signor Generale. Addio, addio; may your Excellency live in prosperity a thousand years! Addio, addio, addio!' he mounted and disappeared at a rapid pace, followed by all his band.

There was a pause, while the General and his Aide-de-camp stood looking along the road which their strange visitors had taken. The last echoes of their horse-hoofs died away, the torches spluttered and burnt low, the storm continued, the General turned to re-enter the house; and as he entered he turned to his young companion, and said, 'Let us thank God, Quandel, that the play is over and we are safe, and there's no further occasion to stay out in the rain! Let us go upstairs and finish that macaroni!'

The first thing was to unearth poor old Signor Girolamo, and that took some ten minutes of searching and shouting. At last, however, he crept out of the cellars, rushed into the General's arms and embraced him, heaping blessings on the Madonna, who had preserved them all, and then they all joyfully proceeded to the supper-room. One would imagine that the viands must have been cold by this time, but the General does not mention the fact, and dwells on the excellence of the supper, and the wine, and the old padrone's stories of old times—of the Saracens, and Manfred, and the cruel Charles, and the sad fate of young Conradin. Then the old gentleman insisted on drinking the health of Gonzalo de Cordova, the great captain who defeated the French on the plains of Cerignola, not far from this very palazzo, and of various other ancient worthies, ending with a bumper to the health of the King, after which, the wine having done its work, he fell back in his arm-chair, and two minutes later was fast asleep.

'Now, my dear Quandel,' said the General, 'go to the post-house and get horses as quickly as possible.' 'Now, General? To-night!' The young man looked rather rueful at the prospect of leaving those comfortable quarters. 'Yes, now, immediately. I don't distrust Gaetano, but as to those rascals of his, they are as likely as not to quarrel with him for letting us slip through their fingers, and insist on coming back to look us up. We should be fools to risk it. The coast is clear now, for they will feel sure we are safe in bed till to-morrow morning. Go, order the horses, and tell Raphael not to light the carriage lamps, and take care there is no cracking of postillion's whips or lighting of cigars.'

So Quandel went, while the General helped to carry the old padrone to bed, slipped a gratuity into the old major-domo's hand, left messages of thanks and compliments to the sleeping host; and in a quarter of an hour the carriage was ready, and off the travellers started.

'Now, Quandel,' said the General, 'we had better arrange that one of us should sleep while the other wakes.' But one was sound asleep already, and the General, after contemplating the young Aide-de-camp's sleeping form with an indulgent smile, took the watching upon himself, and they rolled silently and swiftly along the road to Naples.

Thus ended the General's encounter with the redoubtable Vardarelli, of whom he says, 'They harassed the provinces, fought the troops, robbed right and left, but seldom, if ever, committed murder in cold blood.' After a while they made up their minds to submit to the Government, and come to terms of peace. One cannot help feeling sorry when one hears the end of the story, which shall be told in the General's own words: 'Don Gaetano, his brothers, and most of his band, lost their lives in the village of Urruri in the Abruzzi, where, on a former occasion they had committed excesses, which were not forgotten by the inhabitants. They had returned there with confidence, as they had been pardoned, and were now in the service of the Government. But the inhabitants, calling to mind their former bad conduct, laid an ambuscade for them, and one morning, as they mounted their horses and blew their trumpets, they were surprised by a discharge of musketry from all the windows by which they were surrounded, and Don Gaetano and his band thus lost their lives.' Truly, poor Don Gaetano had cause for his fears of the '*Vendetta*' overtaking him, even if the King was willing to grant him pardon and a command. And so ends a true story of an adventure with brigands sixty years ago.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

BY LOUISA DUNDAS.

V.

(2 Samuel viii.) We turn for a time to the wars of David; no longer merely defensive. Not only against the heathen possessors of Israel's promised inheritance, but far beyond its actual confines his arms were carried, under the guidance and with the sanction of Jehovah, as we know by the refrain of this divine battle-song: 'The Lord preserved David' (R.V. 'gave victory unto David') 'whithersoever he went.' The unification of Israel, her political position and influence had now to be secured and made permanent, and in order to maintain well-organised internal arrangements, such conquest as would define her borders and repel aggressive invaders, was necessary. We press upon our readers the importance of this stage of Revelation; 'Jewish history,' interesting as it is, is not the ultimate object to be sought for. Each point, in the warfare or domestic government, is replete with Messianic teaching;* 'It was as conqueror, even more than as ruler, that David especially appears as the Messiah, the Anointed One.' We cannot too deeply drink in the lessons taught us by this earthly warfare, lessons often neglected, strangely misunderstood, even though accentuated by the later prophecy: 'Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel?—I have trodden the winepress alone.' The militant aspect of Christ and His Church, the battle to precede conquest and security, this has to be shown in the achievement by Christ's ancestor, of what Israel in selfish cowardice had left unfinished on the passing away of their warrior-saint, Joshua. Thus truly, as we follow him through his series of victories, we perceive David's mission—

'————on us to impress
The portent of a blood-stained holiness.'†

Those who read the narrative as merely human history, fail to catch the lesson.

(vv. 1, 2.) ‡ The Philistines are first assailed, as if with a view to the capture which follows. Metheg-Ammah probably means some strongly-fortified post or pass, 'the bridle of the city,' which ensured the possession of Gath. We know nothing of any reasons for the breach of alliance with Moab, the country of David's kindred, unless we accept an uncertain tradition, that the king had treacherously put to death the aged parents committed to his keeping (1 Sam. xxii. 3). David now divided the Moabite prisoners into three lots, one of which was spared, the rest slain, while the country became a tributary province. Having thus secured the southern borders, David begins in the north a series of conflicts destined to last to the Captivity and beyond it, being revived in the Maccabean days, until Syria and Palestine became Roman possessions. Hadad (Ἅδαδος) was the sun-god of Syria, which accounts for the recurrence so often of the name for their kings. The present ruler Hadad-ezer, seems to have attempted some enterprise to recover what had been taken from him in the reign of Saul; or to dispute the northern boundaries. 'Euphrates' is omitted in the R. V. as not being in the Hebrew, but the sense of the A. V. is right, as this river is undoubtedly implied. In spite of the coalition of the king of Zobah with the still more powerful Aramæan tribe whose capital was Damascus, these provinces were reduced to vassalage and came under tribute.* The 'garrisons' of verse 6, sometimes read 'officers,' were probably concerned in collecting this tribute, and we may measure the greatness of the victory when we remember the renown of Damascus both for its beauty, wealth, and all but invincible strength; 'the earthly Paradise,' as it was named by Khaled and his victorious hosts, A.D. 636. Besides the capture of chariots and horses (the small remnant of one hundred indicating the first Jewish attempt at chariot-warfare) David secures an immense booty in gold, silver, and brass. Whether this last is copper or actual brass is uncertain; the Syrian copper-mines were very rich, and the metal in great request among the Phenician workers.† Some of this beautiful metal-work comes into the victors' hands from the king of Hamath, Toi by name. He had evidently cause to dread extinction by his powerful Syrian rivals, and now sends his son Joram to congratulate David and offer him this splendid tribute. The cities of Betah and Berothai (Tibhath and Chun in 1 Chron. xviii.) cannot be identified by these names, but the Arabic version gives them as Emesa, the present Hums,‡ and Baalbek. The spoil thus taken we see laid up in store for the service of God. The proper reading of 'Syrians' in v. 13 is Edomites, the Valley of Salt running down to the Dead Sea.§ Though mentioned in this summary of his conquests, this Edomite war was protracted and obstinate, as appears from parallel passages (*vide* Ps. lx.). It was embittered by the old race jealousy, which never died out, as psalm and prophecy remind us, till the Idumæan king strove to exterminate David's line in his infant rival, 'the Child Jesus.'

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* Lectures on the Jewish Church, xxiii.

† Lyra Apostolica, xviii.

‡ Space prevents our giving the parallel passages in Chronicles; but we advise students to refer to them, and to have a map at hand.

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* Josephus says the king of Damascus was another Hadad.

† As copper is named in Deut. viii. 9, some suppose these mines to have been in Anti-Libanus.

‡ Hums is now a Christian bishopric.

§ The LXX. reads Idumæa.

(v. 15.) Meantime the domestic government is organised. Joab, David's nephew, is at the summit of his ambition. The 'recorder' is an officer well known in ancient Courts, a kind of prime minister and king's remembrancer, keeping the chronicles of the kingdom (Esth. vi. 1, 2). The house of Eleazar now comes into prominence again, Zadok the son of Ahitub being henceforth named first among the priests. The two next names must have been accidentally inverted, and the error repeated in the parallel passages. The only alternative would be, that Abiathar had been superseded by his son Ahimelech, on account of old age or incapacity, and 'this though not impossible, is utterly improbable.'* Seraiah is a 'secretary of state.' The valiant Benaiah is more fully described later on; he seems to have been in command of a mercenary band—the Cherethites, who had become instead of enemies, servants of David, forming his body-guard; some think them Philistines, others Cretans in origin. 'Pelethites' were probably officials employed as runners, or it may be, as executioners like the Roman lictors. (v. 18.) The manhood of David's sons shows the lapse of years. The R. V. reads 'priests' for chief rulers, and the Hebrew is 'cohen' pl. 'cohanim;' the term now in use for the priesthood, but which is derived from a root signifying 'ministry.' The ambiguity is precisely what might occur in English between ministers of state and of religion. That the princes ever intermeddled with the duties of the Levitical tribe is an unwarrantable idea. †

The episode of Chapter ix. is very touching, and helps us to settle the chronology. David's first leisure-time enables him to inquire for any possible survivors of Saul's house; Michal, whether with or without an infant child, must have been dead ere now. Mephi-bosheth, or Merib-baal, is feeble both in body and mind. His name has already appeared (Chap. iv. 4), at which time he must have been a sickly and crippled boy of thirteen, on whose blighted life the champions of Saul's dynasty could build no future hopes. As father of a little child, Micha—the Hebrew term applies to an infant of two years—Mephi-bosheth must have been two or three and twenty when summoned to the king's presence, and this brings us to the ninth or tenth year of David's single reign, and the early manhood of his own elder sons. The feeble crippled prince has plainly no idea of such generosity being possible, and in fact it was rare indeed from a successful to a fallen rival. His language is cringing even to servility, but he finds himself restored to the original prosperity of his grandfather, while Ziba and his household are bound to care for the estate and provide for the prince's maintenance; Ziba, according to Josephus, being one of Saul's freedmen. David, therefore, in place of receiving Ziba's tribute of the fruits, orders that it shall be paid to Mephi-bosheth, and with further tenderness to the son of his own friend, he gives him a perpetual place at the royal table, making Jerusalem his home. His former retreat is interesting. Lo-debar is supposed to have been near Ish-bosheth's capital, Mahanaim, it may be the same as Debir; and the host and entertainer is Machir, son of Ammiel, the same name as Eliam. The latter name is noted in a special manner, and as he is probably the father of Bath-sheba, her brother is therefore Mephibosheth's friend, and we hear of him later. In Chapter x. we find David again plunged into war. A friendly message to the king of Ammon meets with a brutal repulse, and yet more, with personal ill-usage of the ambassadors, an offence against the laws of nations. David, with kindly sympathy for the messengers, at once prepares for new hostilities. This Hanun can scarcely be the son of Nahash mentioned in 1 Sam. xi., as fifty years or more must have passed since then. Another of the same name has perhaps intervened, who befriended David; and if Hanun were, as seems probable, a young untried ruler, it is likely he yielded, as David's grandson did, to the foolish counsel of young courtiers, who led him to suspect as spies the emissaries of a friendly and powerful neighbour.* (v. 6.) The Syrians have watched their opportunity, and a formidable league is made between the Ammonites and several of their tribes. The petty states named, seem from the Heb. 'Aram Naharaim,' Syrians 'of the rivers,' to have been those of Mesopotamia, willing to be 'hired' and serve as mercenaries against the power that had reduced Hadadezer.† It does not appear that David was with the army, but his two generals divide the enterprise, one encountering the Syrians and the other the Ammonites, with a promise of mutual support. We have no reason up to this point for liking Joab, but nobler words than those of his address (vv. 11, 12) to his brother and companion in arms could not be desired. The charge to fight 'for the cities of our God' is explained by the object of relieving Medeba, the city of the Reubenites, given to them when taken from Sihon.‡ It was fifteen miles from Rabbah, which, being immensely strong, now stands a long siege; the Syrian hosts are engaged meantime by Joab in the open field. Had Medeba fallen, the horrors of Moloch-worship would have been restored through a large tract of country; but the Syrians flee before Joab, to rally again, recruited by fresh troops from the banks of the Euphrates (v. 16), and incited by

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* 'Speaker's Commentary,' note.

† Though recommending Dean Stanley's beautiful Lecture xxiii., I am wholly unable to accept his views as to David's assumption of any priestly functions. Besides his kingly powers, he held those of a Nabi, and therefore, filled by the Spirit, was able to exercise his poetic and musical gifts in developing and arranging the worship and ritual. The wearing at times of an ephod was not distinctively priestly, any more than cassock and surplice for a chorister. We sometimes forget that David was prophet as well as king, but never a priest.

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* *Vide* 'Speaker's Commentary.'

† *Cf.* Parallel passages, 1 Chron. xix.

‡ *Vide* Numb. xxi. 30; Josh. xiii. 9, 16.

Hadadezer, to renew the attack. The Ammonites, instead of strengthening their allies, fortify themselves behind their strong walls; and Joab, leaving his brother to carry on the siege, goes to Jerusalem, where his report stirs David to take the field in person. 'Helam' is an obscure word, and does not seem to be a proper name.* At some point eastward of Jordan David gives battle to the great Syrian host, utterly discomfiting them, slaying Shobach their general, and breaking up the formidable league between Mesopotamia and the children of Ammon. The very phrase in verse 19, 'the kings that were servants to Hadarezer,' gives us an idea of the splendid success achieved by Israel, whose tribes, unarmed and hiding in the rocky wadys, had shrunk from assisting their first king in his early wars with the Philistines.

(Chap. xi.) We now reach the most important, the most significant, and perhaps the most instructive, passage of David's whole life. The preservation of this account, the unadorned simplicity of the narration, under the guidance of the Spirit of God—surely speak for themselves of the entire faithfulness and trustworthiness of these records. It is plain that this episode comes in as a parenthesis in the story of conquest. David has returned to Jerusalem with Joab and the main army, while Abishai is maintaining the lingering blockade of Rabbah, till, on the return of spring, he is joined by his brother. 'David tarried still at Jerusalem.' The incident which follows would have been familiar enough in any other Eastern Court; here the plain language of the seventh and tenth commandments was known to both the offenders. Of course the stimulus to license given by the introduction of harem life was already breaking down many of the restrictions and safeguards which had hitherto fenced God's people.† Bath-sheba was the daughter of Eliam, or Ammiel, and sister to Machir, the protector of Mephi-bosheth. As Eliam's name occurs later in the list of David's body-guard, where he is mentioned as son of Ahitophel the Gilonite, the daughter's marriage is easily accounted for, Uriah being Eliam's comrade and fellow-guardsman. He is evidently a naturalised foreigner, being one of the 'Gibborim,' or mighty men who had drawn round David, attracted by the bold daring of his life of exile, so that his faithful service had by this time extended over many years. Of Bath-sheba we know little, except her surpassing beauty, and that she was an unworthy daughter of Israel. How far self-respect might have warded off even the first temptation, we cannot perhaps judge; but we may infer that neither remonstrance nor resistance was offered by herself. Terrible as is their joint offence, we probably feel that the worst part of David's sin is the tissue of treacherous hypocrisy by which he seeks to blind the husband to his own dishonour, and failing in this, to destroy his faithful soldier. But we must recollect his excuse. By her message, the unhappy woman throws herself on his mercy. Her life is forfeited by the Mosaic law, and the king's open protection could not save her from the penalty if the husband chose to exact it. It is probable that some rumours had reached Uriah concerning his wife, and this explains in part his unwillingness to go home. In v. 11 he incidentally mentions an interesting fact—the presence of the Ark in the camp. It may have been taken there under the priests' guardianship, on the return of Joab to the war; so that each step of the campaign might be under the guidance of Almighty God. Is it possible that some relaxation of order, some negligence of devotion, the absence from Jerusalem of some, at least, who were entitled to advise and remonstrate with the king, may in part, account for this terrible fall? It is in keeping with what we know of Joab, that he utters no remonstrance on receiving, in David's letter, Uriah's death-warrant, conveyed by his own hand. He enters into the cruel stratagem, and sets about its accomplishment at once.* We should note (v. 21) his allusion to past history (Judges ix. 53). It is an 'undesigned coincidence,' showing that there existed written records of the past, and that David and his Court studied them. Bath-sheba's mourning for her husband would last for seven days, after which time she takes her place as the favourite wife of the harem. Time passes, and the child of sin is born. 'But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.' So many and so varied are the comments we have heard on David's sin, that there seems but little to add. In some minds there is a feeling that its suddenness and enormity are unnatural in a true servant of God; that right principles so easily shattered betoken unreal and delusive holiness. But the horror of David's conduct lies in its truth to our fallen nature, whenever we persuade ourselves of the necessity of evasion or concealment; a temptation which assails those who have a character to preserve, a reputation for goodness in the sight of men. As to his first fall—a great master of the human heart has put into the mouth of a man, speaking of his tempters to a hideous crime, these words—

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* Note, 'Speaker's Commentary;' the Hebrew seems to mean 'they gathered in numbers.'

† *Vide* Blunt's 'Undesigned Coincidences of Scripture.'

> 'They met me in the day of my success.'

So it was with the king, returning to his home elated with his own praises, flushed with the pride of victory. Possibly the words of Ps. xxxii. may show us that though asleep, conscience was not at rest during the interval of some months between Uriah's death and the prophet's visit. 'In all time of our wealth, good Lord, deliver us.'

(Chap. xii.) And God's time of deliverance came. Nathan comes before us, as calm and majestic as Samuel himself. The Vulgate has a striking preface to the parable which S. Jerome appears to have taken from Josephus's copy of the LXX.: 'Give judgment on this point.'* Nathan puts the matter as a judicial case for David's settlement, and if we may accept the reading, it gives additional force to the parable, showing how David's natural generosity was stirred, as the prophet, full of God's Spirit, meant it to be—so that he passes sentence of death on 'the man that hath done this thing.' Then, as the lightning's scathing flash, followed by the thunder-peal, comes the word: *Thou art the man!* During the awful denunciation which follows, the adulterer and murderer is speechless, but his eyes are finally opened. We must measure David's repentance by Ps. li., with its divinely-inspired expressions, putting into articulate words the very cry of our human nature at the foot of the Cross. It is at this point we learn the real contrast between Saul and David, the gulf which divides the two; we see why the lesser offences, as we deem them, cause Saul's rejection, while the worst sins a man can commit do not separate David's soul from his God. And why? Because in Saul's mind, vain, jealous, selfish—the uppermost thought when rebuked, is: 'What will man think?' In David's, 'Against Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight.' Saul's cry, as he clings in despair to Samuel's robe, 'I have sinned, yet honour me now before the elders of Israel,' shows the working of his soul; but to David, as he listens in mute anguish to Nathan's burning words, ending with the assurance that the awful retribution shall be 'before all Israel and before the sun,' there is left one consciousness only: 'I have sinned against the Lord.' What shall we say of the mercy which has preserved this record—giving us the lesson, hardest and yet most needful, for our sin-sick nature to learn? It is not the number of a man's sins, nor even their character, that makes the difference between a sinner and a saint. The foundation-stone of saintliness is laid in a repentance which regards sin only as it appears in the sight of God. Such a repentance was that of David; not wounded self-importance, nor mortified self-love, but the broken and contrite heart God will not despise. One thought more. Some feel, perhaps it is natural, that after David's fall, the glorious and symbolical part of his reign is over, that in short, his penitence cannot raise him again in our estimation to the level of the type of Christ. We cannot think of the betrayer and murderer as we did of the champion of Ephes-dammim and the friend of Jonathan. In like manner, some of us put our fellow-creatures on impossible pinnacles of perfection, and refuse to pardon them after an offence which mars our ideal. Is this well? God's teaching would make us infer that real contrition, such as that which found its expression in Pss. xxxii. and li., is an ascent possibly to a higher level than that attained before. The writer of these words, so precious to the Church and her penitents in every age, was certainly permitted to typify Christ afresh.* The Crucified One made from the Cross that act of confession which we could not make for ourselves. He alone could view sin as God views it, and as unfallen man should view it; and, 'numbered with the transgressors,' He confessed it for them all. When we look on David's genuine self-abhorrence, as he measures his sin by God's standard, owning that the sacrifices of the law cannot atone for it—we get a foreshadowing of Him Who was 'made sin for us,' Who expiated earth's guilt before all Israel and before the sun, which hid its face 'in that dark noontide hour.'

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* *Vide* 'Speaker's Commentary,' note: 'A word of honest and faithful remonstrance from those about him in the first instance, or from Joab on the receipt of David's letter, might have prevented one or both of David's crimes.'

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* 'Responde mihi judicium.'

(v. 15.) Nathan departs, having pronounced both the immediate and the future retribution. We see David's better self restored, in his tenderness both for the child and its mother, in the faith which intercedes, even to the last, in the resignation to God's punishment, in the affectionate intercourse with his household. As we noticed before, in Hebrew narration one episode is finished and then an earlier subject resumed. Bath-sheba's story is carried down to the birth of Solomon, whose second name leaves us no doubt of God's renewed blessing, by the hand of His prophet. (vv. 26–31.) If the narrative is consecutive, the siege of Rabbah must have lasted more than two years. Its strength lay in an abundant supply of water, a river running through the lower city, while the upper fortress was on a hill.† Joab, on cutting off the stream, summons the king to the assault. It is thought that 'the king's crown' is literally the crown of their great idol; as the Hebrew and LXX. read 'Malcham,' i.e. 'Moloch,' and the king was Hanun. Again, it is disputed in v. 31 whether the expressions refer to cruel tortures inflicted on the captives of Ammon, or to hard servitude exacted from them. The Hebrew is obscure, but seems to favour the former interpretation. Such punishments were not uncommon in ancient warfare, and further, it is possible that David's expedition took place before Nathan's visit, while he was in an impenitent and obdurate state, irritated by the semi-repulse of his troops, and desiring to salve an uneasy conscience by cruelly revenging himself upon the slayers of Uriah.

(Chap. xiii.) This chapter might seem too painful to touch upon, yet it cannot be wholly passed by. We learn *how* God punishes, by letting us reap the harvest we have sown. The death of an innocent infant was the first and lightest part of David's long course of parental suffering. His children, now grown up, seem to inherit, with his personal beauty, his fire and excitability, his quick impulses, his hasty temper. Only one daughter is ever named, Absalom's sister, both being grandchildren of the King of Geshur. Tamar's fair stateliness is expressed by her name, signifying 'a palm-tree.' Women were as yet not wholly secluded, but the strange perversion of God's blessed ordinance of family life—the harem—is already working its fatal mischief by undermining the free and happy intercourse of brother- and sister-hood. There is still extant, among the native princes of India, a singular law, dating from the remotest antiquity, which possibly prevailed wherever polygamy and despotic government were combined. The king's eldest son may not visit the harem of his younger brother, but the younger may visit his. The explanation is, that among the rights of the heir to the throne is that of taking any woman he pleases to be his wife; the younger son, having no such inconvenient privilege, may go where he likes.* If any such usage then prevailed among heathen Courts, it is perhaps some slight mitigation of Amnon's crime that, weak and self-indulgent, flattered as the heir, and incited by Jonadab's pernicious counsel, he should be confused as to his own royal rights; but his treacherous and brutal conduct is without excuse. Absalom now comes into prominence, much of his future career is indeed explained by feelings it is impossible to censure: indignant sympathy with his sister, anger at his father's leniency, and determination to take the law into his own hands. (v. 21.) 'The king was very wroth,' but the LXX. adds an explanation, that he would not vex Amnon; because he was 'the first-born.' This must have seemed rank injustice to the younger brother: yet David's heart may have been heavy with the remembrance of his own sin, and the consequent impossibility of passing sentence upon Amnon, who deserved death. Two years pass away, Absalom waiting till suspicion was lulled for the accomplishment of his design. He then invites his family to a great sheep-shearing feast (like that of Nabal), and as a blind to his purpose, urges the king to be present, thus closing his father's eyes, and inducing him to consent to Amnon's visit. David urges that the royal retinue will be a heavy charge to his son, and, with considerate kindness, refuses to go, though he blesses Absalom, little knowing that this is the last occasion of really cordial affection between them. At Baal-hazor, some miles to the north-east of Bethel, Absalom's vengeance is taken upon the wretched prince, when his heart, like Nabal's, is 'merry with wine.' (v. 30.) There is a touch of nature in the exaggerated story which throws the king and Court into consternation. His wily nephew, Jonadab, has evidently known beforehand the meaning of Absalom's hospitality, and has forborne to warn the unhappy victim of his own insidious counsels of the trap thus laid for him. A good deal of David's character comes before us at this point: he is tender and affectionate to his children, grieved at their sorrows, overwhelmed by their deaths; but his is a nature that throws off grief, and recovers its tone when the sorrow is past.

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* We would ask those who can do so to consult Mason's 'Faith of the Gospel,' chap. vi., ss. 18, 19; 'Christ's Death a confession of sin.'

† *Vide* 'Dictionary of the Bible,' 'Rabbah.'

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* I was told this by one who had been high in command in India, and seen much of native Courts. I have often thought it helped to explain these incidents, painful as they are.

(v. 37.) Absalom flies to his grandfather, a chief, or petty sovereign of the Geshurites. There was more than one tribe, and Talmai's dwelling-place cannot be identified, though it must have been somewhere in Bashan. There was no alliance, David had attacked the Geshurites while at Gath, and as we have said, the mother of Absalom and Tamar may have been a captive prize, with beauty which specially marked her children. 'David mourned for his son every day.' This refers not to Amnon, but to the fugitive, whose three years' exile at an unfriendly Court probably had an unhappy effect on his future relations with his father, whose soul 'longed to go forth' unto him. Once more the king has to reap his self-sown harvest! One sin reflected in Amnon, another in Absalom. Nathan's words are in his ear: 'The sword shall never depart from thine house.'

The next occurrence is in keeping with the customs and feelings of Oriental nations. Nothing is more common than to influence a person by means of a parable, to put a supposititious case to him, and get him to give an impartial judgment upon it before suffering him to perceive the real drift of the story. Such, under Divine guidance, was Nathan's mode of proceeding, and a similar action is related in 1 Kings xx. 35. Joab, a politican as well as warrior, has watched his master closely; he sees that, left to himself, the king would recall his son; but there is an evident hostility on the part of the other brethren, who witnessed Amnon's death, and felt that his blood should be required of the slayer. David may have feared their violence, and, as commentators have suggested, it is not impossible that Bath-sheba exerted her powerful influence to keep Absalom at a distance, as the most likely to be Solomon's rival. Careful attention to the widow of Tekoah's imaginary tale brings out a good deal of all this: she had 'words put into her mouth' to suit the actual facts. She must not be regarded as practising unlawful arts, but merely as a sagacious and quick-witted person, literally 'a wise woman' resorted to for advice, and held in much the same esteem as a fortune-telling gipsy would have been among our common people a century ago.* She acts her part very skilfully, bringing in and fitting together all the points prescribed by Joab (v. 8), till David promises investigation of her case, and settlement of her demand for her son's life. She now goes a step further; the king's favour will stir all the avengers of blood against her son, and his clemency will not hinder the curse on innocent blood—let this curse rest therefore on her own house. Again she is bidden to refer all complaints to the king, and (v. 11) at last extracts a promise upon oath, that the life for which she has pleaded shall be inviolably safe. (vv. 11, 12.) She now reveals her meaning, for she has wrought David's mind to the required point. The king can exercise his perogative of mercy to save a life comparatively valueless and obscure from punishment, at the risk of leaving innocent blood unavenged. Why does he then refuse to 'fetch home his banished'? (v. 14.) We know that the wise woman, at the dictation of Joab, sent this 'shaft home.' The king is reminded of God's Providence, recalling him from the strangers' land. But is it not an instance of a 'mark the archer little meant;' and, more wonderfully still, does it not help us to understand the golden thread of Messianic prophecy inwoven with every Scripture story? The Shepherd-King is bidden to recall his erring sheep to its pasture—the father to fetch home his banished son; because God doth devise means that His banished be not expelled from Him (R. V. 'be not an outcast'). Yes, and those 'devised means,' when we look at them in the light of the parables in St. Luke xv., we can estimate as neither the king nor his advisers could do—we listen as to a Divine oracle spoken by the stammering tongue of an infant—to the 'wise woman of Tekoah;' she prophesied of Redemption. Absalom is a son of Israel, one of God's people. Here she presses her argument home, Joab knew this would powerfully weigh with his master. Had he not deplored to Saul his own exile from the privileges of citizenship and true worship? Would he leave his son any longer among aliens? David now perceives her drift, and has little doubt as to who has been her counsellor, even as he asks the question. David's prophetic character is acknowledged by the term, 'as an angel of God;' and, having now passed his word for Absalom's safety, he gives Joab the desired permission to set forth on his embassy to 'bring back the young man Absalom.' It is possible that the half-measure of refusing to see him was intended to allay the discontent of those who had wished him punished; possible too that Bath-sheba's influence prevailed to keep Absalom from Court; while Joab seems to think he has done enough for the present in bringing him to Jerusalem, and will not incur the suspicion of plotting in secret. So for two years the prince is kept at a distance, to his evident mortification. He seems to have greatly developed in beauty and manliness during his absence, and this by degrees attracts popular sentiment to him; he has also married, we never hear his wife's name, and the three sons die in their early childhood. The daughter has the name and the beauty of her father's ill-fated sister, and her daughter is Maachah, the wife of Rehoboam.* By a stratagem at last, Absalom, weary of his position, forces an interview with Joab. We can hardly wonder at his impatience, nor was his demand wholly unreasonable. The father and son meet again, but the reconciliation is a hollow one. The two years' interval has been employed by the prince in setting up rival interests of his own. Joab, who, with his many faults, is roughly faithful to the king, probably sees it would have been well to leave Absalom at the Court of Geshur.

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* A certain amount of rude divination, not involving intercourse, real or fancied, with the unseen world, may still have been practised by such persons, but nothing like 'necromancy.'

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* The LXX. makes Tamar herself Rehoboam's wife, but the dates seem scarcely to allow of this.

(Chap xv.) It is not possible to say exactly how much space is occupied by these events. Absalom's character degenerates at each step; but whether—from Bath-sheba's, or other hostile influence—any real provocation is now given him, we are not told. He courts popularity by assuming a degree of princely state, and then by affecting a great zeal for justice. (vv. 2–6.) He persuades the people that their affairs are not properly looked into; and stands in 'the way of the gate'—the place where public cases were judicially settled—openly professing his willingness to be the king's deputy or judge in his own person; and by these and many other wiles he steals 'the hearts of the men of Israel.' This probably occupies some time. The actual conspiracy against his kind and generous father, in all likelihood, suggested itself only by degrees. Having at last, by his rank and beauty, his winning manners, and success in instilling a sense of general grievance among his father's subjects, secured, as he imagines, a powerful party on his side, he lays the train for a regular plot. (v. 7.) The 'forty years,' though a very ancient Hebrew reading, and therefore retained in our versions, must be another instance of a 'misplaced dot.' The Syriac and Chaldee agree with Josephus in putting 'four' years, which gives a fair idea of the time these transactions would take. Absalom—like Joab and the woman of Tekoah, and others—knows that the mention of a religious vow will secure his father's concurrence. Hebron was his birthplace and early home, and his choice of it for the performance of an act of solemn sacrifice seemed natural. So, with the king's permission and blessing, the son departs, taking a band of adherents, apparently unconscious of the meditated treason; which, however, now bursts forth into open flame. To the unhappy father, the worst blow must have been the defection of Ahitophel, his own trusted chief counsellor, who, from his dwelling-place, Giloh, in Southern Judah,* joins the traitors at Hebron. When we remember that Ahitophel is the father of Ammiel, it gives a clue to David's conduct, which to some appears out of keeping with his warlike character. His sin again finds him out. He takes the whole rebellion as fore-ordained of God, believes that many, besides the grandfather of his wife, will desert to the rebel standard, and that his highest and best course will be to save Jerusalem from the horrors either of a siege or an assault, which would cost all the lives most precious to him. Leaving his palace, therefore, to the keeping of some of the inferior members of the harem, and gathering his own especial retinue, and the rest of the household, he prepares for departure (v. 17) 'to a place far off' (R.V., to Beth-merhak: i.e. The Far House)—probably a fortified place of refuge beyond Jerusalem—till their further movements could be settled. The Cherethites and Pelethites, already mentioned, are faithful to their king, and Ittai's conduct is as noble as his master's. He is one of the aliens who, attracted to David in his roving life, had become one of his 'Gibborim;' and as the king now releases the Gittites from their fealty to what may soon be a ruined cause, bidding them go, 'with mercy and truth,' back to their native Gath, we can hardly ask for better assurance of the affection he inspires in his subjects than Ittai's words, as he swears, 'Surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, even there also will thy servant be.' David's Son once had occasion to say: 'I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.' The priests now appear, bringing the Ark; but this the king orders to be carried back again. He will not, like Israel at Aphek, make 'a fetish' for himself; he and his concerns are in God's hand. It may be God will bring him back; if not, 'let Him do as seemeth Him good;' the Ark, independently of His blessing, can profit nothing. The guardian-priests are to return to Jerusalem, while the king, amid the clamorous weeping of his subjects, takes his way forth from the city of his God. But the important events of that flight across Kedron must be left for our next Paper.

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* Josh. xv. 51.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

Questions for May.

41. Describe the course of David's aggressive wars, with the limits of his conquests (not going beyond chap. viii.).

42. Write a short note on his home government.

43. Give an account of his proceedings towards Mephibosheth.

44. What foreign league was formed against David? (Give an allusion to it, if you can, from the Psalms.)

45. Write a few words about Ammiel, Machir, Ahitophel, and Uriah; showing their connection with the history (up to xv. 18).

46. Describe Nathan's mission to David, and its results.

47. Mention two ways in which David foreshadows our Lord (chaps. viii.–xii. inclusive).

48. Describe Joab's stratagem for the recall of Absalom.

49. Trace the beginnings of Absalom's revolt up to his proclamation at Hebron.

50. Put into their right connection these phrases: 'one full line to keep alive,' 'beyond the river,' 'when kings go forth to battle,' 'the sword devoureth,' 'the city of waters,' 'be chargeable unto thee,' 'quench my coal,' 'in the way of the gate,' 'sent by the hand of the prophet,' 'comest but yesterday.'

N.B.—The answers are in no case to go beyond chap. xv. v. 39.

Answers to be sent not later than June 2nd, to Miss L. Dundas, 37, Manor Place, Edinburgh. The writer's real name and address, as well as the *nom de plume*, to be clearly written on each sheet.

Class List for March.

Class I.

Verena	97	Lucilla	83	Hypatia	78
Greta	96	Lily	82	Carlotta	
Bubbles	95	Daisy	81	Joiner	
Elpis	92	Pyrethrum		Lancelot	
Elphin	90	Sparrow	80	Brown Bess	77
Water Wagtail	88	Moon		Firefly	
Celestine	87	Anonyma	79	Constantine	75
Iza	86	Winifred			
Breidden	85	Penholder			

Class II.

Ina	73	Atalanta	70	Spectacles	61
Ellen		Ariel	67	Rose Marie	59
Juno	72	Gwen	63		

Moon for January, 75. Breidden for February, 79.

DEBATABLE GROUND.

Is agreement of belief and opinion necessary to a close friendship?

This question has called forth a most delightful set of papers. Chelsea China considers that the answer depends so much on temperament, on the state of the friends' mental development, and on the respective strength and dearness of the friendship and of the beliefs, that no general answer can be found for it.

It has been said by some one that people differ much more in the way they hold opinions than in the opinions themselves, and, perhaps, agreement as to whether the point in question is of vital importance is more necessary to friendship, than coming to the same conclusion upon it. Or still more, the question depends on whether the belief or unbelief is regarded as involving moral blame. There might be love, enough to cause heart-breaking sorrow, between an inquisitor and a heretic; but there could hardly be a relation that could be called friendship. Moreover, there is no doubt that for most people it must make a great difference whether the belief is likely to come into practice. Working *against* the party or form of faith to which the friend belongs, is of course a severe test of friendship. There is no question, however, that, if two friends of fairly equal force of mind and spirit, are of so much the same quality of soul as to have a really close 'love of choice' for each other, and ye come to different conclusions on vital points, though they may never alter each other's *forms* of belief, they will immensely modify their spirit. Each will see the other's point of view, and the crystal certainty of conviction will be softened, whether for good or for evil. At any rate, if each friend holds her own faith untouched, she will think very differently of the other's after her friendship has made it known to her.

Chelsea China thinks the question both serious and practical, and likely, in these days, to come before even her younger readers. To these the forming or not forming such a friendship would often resolve itself into a question of obedience. If they are free to act, and if the attraction is strong, such a friendship may be well worth making; but it will not lead them by easy paths, and always supposing the difference to be really of vital importance, should not be entered into lightly and without consideration.

It is of course taken for granted that real confidential friendship is implied in the question so that *ignoring* important subjects would be impossible.

But, setting aside such vital points, there is surely no doubt that friendship can thrive on difference of opinion. Chelsea China can recall a friendship which developed itself through argument and strife, and even tears, over the character of King Charles I. But though that girlish controversy did really symbolise wide differences of temperament and modes of thought, that friendship has never suffered from them. To differ in belief and opinion is not the same thing as *having no interests or tastes in common*. That is a much more fatal thing to friendship; Chelsea China ventures to think it a pity when political differences affect social intercourse. She thinks a friendship between very high-minded women *might* survive a difference of opinion on the practical usefulness of the G. F. S., even if one of them was a Diocesan President.

But after all 'birds of a feather' do 'flock together,' and Chelsea China finds it very nice when her friends agree with her. She is not sure that she always finds it quite so satisfactory to agree with her friends.

But what is she saying? Is not the very fact that we are 'debating' a proof that we have tastes and interests in common? Since minds are not all made alike, if they work on the same subjects, they must often differ in conclusions. So difference of opinion may be a proof of similarity of tastes!

Chelsea China, having often complained of the papers being too much alike, is happy to say that this month they are so different and so interesting that she would like to print them all, as each brings out a separate point. As this is impossible, she has endeavoured to summarize them as well as she can in the small space.

NOES.

Dame Mary thinks agreement of *belief* necessary, since we cannot admit into the closest sanctuary of our heart any one who does not believe in all that is 'dearer to us than life,' but thinks that there may be any amount of diversity of opinion with advantage.

Bildad comes to the same conclusion on much the same ground, 'Can two walk together except they be agreed?'

Ein Mädchen also considers similarity of religious belief necessary, and sees the necessity of great unselfishness, even if tastes materially differ.

F. L. C.'s paper is given, but Chelsea China thinks it rather proves that there must be trial in the friendship of persons of differing faith than that it cannot exist.

Taffy's paper is given in part, as being much the strongest on the negative side. The instance she gives is not one of difference of opinion, but of difference of moral worth.

I think the highest, truest, closest friendship is based upon agreement in belief, though not necessarily alway on agreement of opinion. There is something exhilarating in the friendship in which there is one subject, or perhaps more, in which we do not agree with our friend, but then of course the love and sympathy must be very perfect.

Friendship is made up of sympathy, love, agreement of opinion, and a certain difference in character; but the backbone of it must be religion, if it is to be deep and lasting. We may be drifted apart with the certainty of never meeting again, but the love becomes embalmed as it were by religion. For is there not always the hope of meeting again after death, and the friendship continuing throughout Eternity? But the friends who have not this sweet unity in belief cannot expect their friendship to be lasting. It may be full of warmth and affection and unselfish devotion, but when the sudden strain comes, unless each is firm on this one point, and believes that the other is doing what he thinks is right, bitterness and estrangement are sure to follow.

F. L. C.

My experience has been, that, where difference of opinion exists, there can be no such thing as a real friendship. What has passed for such will prove to be merely a close acquaintance. And if difference of opinion makes this impossible, how much more will that of belief make it so, and we must think that if two people cannot agree on this point, they will not be very likely to on others.

Friendship implies perfect confidence, love, and trust between the friends—a mutual feeling of being quite understood, and how can this exist, if from time to time arguments and discussions spring up based upon lines that can never meet. TAFFY.

Pellegrina, as her byname would suggest, thinks that as the world is wide, and it takes all sorts to make it, that differences of belief and opinion may co-exist with the warmest friendship. Knowledge is so vast, and our capacities so small, that in matters of belief and opinion two persons may be as if standing on the same mountain range but almost out of sight of each other. Yet each may have clearer visions of what is nearest, and they may have valuable experiences to exchange with each other. Indeed, to avoid close intimacy with honest and friendly persons, because of such differences (unless perhaps in the case of the very young), would tend to have a narrowing influence, and encourage prejudices which the healthy friction of mind on mind would disperse. For below beliefs and opinions lie the true honest heart and charitable temper, ready in self as in others to allow for the limitations of human nature.

Pellegrina believes that the attraction of character and the satisfaction of taste are the *sine quâ non* of close friendship. Persons who are faithful adherents to different churches, and also anxious sceptics, may be close friends, but hardly those who reverence a higher life, and those who ignore it. Again, the love of art and literature is a great bond, and the want of it a very serious bar to close friendship with an artistic nature. But where both friends agree in loving art, differences of opinion may be sources of additional interest. It is curious, however, that nothing more hinders close and equal friendship than those solecisms in ways and manners, understood by the term bad taste, and which result in the coarser nature, shocking the delicate instincts of the more refined. Such differences in opinion, if they may be called so, would probably make a close friendship impossible.

I do not think they are, because the *something* which draws us to our friend is infinitely more delicate and subtle than the mere agreement of opinion, and if the something be there, friendship can scarce help but follow. Of course, I mean true friendship, but I do not think this really exists half so often as it is said to do; what we generally describe by it ought more properly to be called companionship. Of course, there must be some common ground of taste, or occupation, some bond of union; but granting this, I am inclined to think that differences of opinion and character, instead of separating, may serve as it were to *dovetail* us together, even as the carpenter dovetails his wood when he wishes the joining to be particularly firm. Does not our cemented china 'stick' most strongly when the broken edge is jagged? And who would have music all concords? Besides, no two people are exactly alike, so in the very closest friendship there must in the nature of things be differences somewhere!

I might think that differing religious belief would be likely to interfere with friendship, but that I knew a case which proves the contrary, of two families of almost diametrically opposite opinions—the one, Evangelical almost to dissent, the other, Roman Catholic. Yet the friendship between individual members of them was warm and true and lifelong, lasting in more than one case to the very borders of that Land, where our differences of opinion, aye, and even belief, will drop from us as things of little worth, but where I think we may (in all humble reverence) hope to take up again our broken threads of friendship. SEMIBREVE.

AYES.

Pellegrina and *Semibreve* are given in full. Chelsea China has kept *Blackbird*, *Beta*, *Double Daisy*, and the *Letter L.* for next month, as they all contain matter not found in the papers given, and she would like more space to do them justice.

She thanks *Ein Mädchen* and *Bildad* for their kind notes. She will keep the latter's question, but she thinks that, if the paper referred to, in the *Monthly Packet*, is read carefully, it is pretty well answered already in that.

Paper received too late from *Pellegrina* on bazaars, to be inserted next month.

QUESTION FOR MAY.

Is there a moral fault at the bottom of vulgarity?

Answers to be sent to Chelsea China, care of the Publishers, before June 1st.

CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY.

THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE.

Questions for May.

17. Give a short retrospect of the Conversion of the Franks.

18. Describe the steps of the Alliance between the Frankish sovereigns and the Popes from 752–800 inclusive, showing to what relations between Pope and Emperor this afterwards led, and emphasise the Church's obligations to Charlemagne.

19. Describe the Council of Frankfort, 787 (avoiding all *discussion* on Iconoclasm).

20. What were the False or Isidorean Decretals, and their results?

Answers to be sent to Bog Oak, care of the Publishers, by June 1st.

N.B.—Books recommended for those who have access to them, Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire* (Macmillan); *Landmarks of Middle Ages*, C. M. Yonge, 3*s*. (Smith and Innes).

February Class List.

First Class.

Polypodium	40	Water Wagtail	34	Verena	33
Etheldreda	39	Papaver		Bluebell	
Kentigern	37	Ierne		Sophy	32
Sycorax		Vorwärts		Andromache	
Cocksmoor	36	Λαμβδα		Hegesippus	30
Firenze		Dubritia	33	Malacoda	
		Violets			

Second Class.

March	29	Trudél	27	Antigone	24
Countess		King Cole	25	Budgerigar	22
Charissa	28	Spider		Cecilia	
Decima		Fidelia	24	White Owl	21
Veritas	27	Theodore		Ina	20
Καθολικος		Scholastica			

Third Class.

Honeysuckle	19	Esclairmonde	16	Beryl	15

REMARKS.

5. Archbishop Theodore's work is most intelligently given by *Etheldreda*, *Cocksmoor*, *Sycorax*, *Polypodium*, *Sophy*, *Verena*, and *Andromache*. That work is thus summarised by Bede: 'To consecrate

Bishops in fitting places, disseminate the rule of right living, and the Catholic mode of celebrating Easter.' We may divide it thus: 1. Increase of Episcopate. 2. General organisation, tending to growth of Parochial system, perhaps most fully organised in Kent. 3. Synods. 4. Ordering of Church services. 5. His 'Penitential,' part of which at any rate he wrote. 6. Centralisation. *Countess:* Theodore did not found Dunwich, but cut off Elmham from it. *Beryl:* Theodore took St. Chad out of York, he did not put him into it; and he appointed Chad, not Wilfrid, to Lichfield. It is too much to say with *Kentigern*, *Charissa*, etc., that he—or any one man—organised the Parochial system. It was very gradual. Aidan, Birinus, and Cedd had made a beginning, and in Bede's days it was not nearly organised, nor indeed till near the Norman Conquest. *Bluebell:* Remember the system of fines on a graduated scale for all sins, set forth in the 'Penitential,' was not Theodore's invention, it was based on the Teutonic law of blood-wite. *Budgerigar* and *Honeysuckle:* Theodore, though a monk, was not in orders when first appointed to Canterbury. No one has mentioned two marks of St. Theodore we still have, viz: the Gospel of the Syro-Phœnician woman, borrowed from his beloved Eastern Use, for the 2nd Sunday in Lent—whereas the Western Church has the Transfiguration. And the special *two* candles on the High Altar, which Dr. Neale says England has ever favoured instead of the Roman six.

6. The Synods are best done by *Etheldreda* and *Polypodium*. *White Owl:* The date of Hertford was 673. *Water Wagtail, Veritas*, etc.: The Canon about increase of the Episcopate was not passed at Hertford. It was deferred. *Cocksmoor*, etc.: Wilfrid must have been in prison at the date of Hatfield, so no doubt he was 'needlessly' but innocently absent. This accusation of his needless absence is a blot on more than one text-book. *Honeysuckle:* The 'Nidd' was held in 706—it ended Wilfrid's cause, restoring him to Ripon and ultimately to Hexham. If *Budgerigar* looks at Bright, p. 413, she will find it; or if she has Perry's *Student's English Church History*, at p. 67; it is in most lives of St. Wilfrid. *Cocksmoor*, *Vorwärts*, *Theodore:* Dunod's speech to Augustine is now known to be spurious. If there ever had been a Metropolitan See in Wales, there was none at this time, and Metropolitical rights was not the question at issue. See Bright, who quotes Haddan, Stubbs, and Rees in this sense.

7. York is the favourite school, and has 14 accounts, Jarrow 13, and Malmesbury 6. *Esclairmonde* will find the last in Maclear's *Conversion of the English*, p. 128. *Verena* confesses St. Cuthbert, Apostle of the Lowlands and Bishop of Lindisfarne, with Cuthbert Abbot of Jarrow, biographer of Bede. *Vorwärts* gallantly carries her excellent account of Malmesbury down to the dissolution. *Beryl* puts Anselm for Aldhelm. *Honeysuckle* should read of St. Aldhelm, who was a greater glory of Malmesbury than the historian William. She also appears to put Alcuin 300 years too late, by

saying the school of York was founded in Rufus' reign, whereas Alcuin was brought up there. Best answered by *Cocksmoor*, *Kentigern*, *Polypodium*, and *Vorwärts*.

8. The Saints are very well done, especially by *Etheldreda*, *Kentigern*, *Water Wagtail*, *Firenze*, *Papaver*, *Polypodium*, *Dubritia*, *Violets*, and Λαμβδα. St. Cuthbert is by far the favourite Saint, having twenty-five admirers, then far behind, St. Hilda, St. Chad, St. Guthlac; while St. Aidan has only ten answers. *Charissa:* St. Hilda did not take the veil by the advice of St. Paulinus, but long after in 649. *Ierne:* Bog-Oak believes that St. Etheldreda's name is retained in our English Calendar, rather than the greater St. Hilda, because fairs were so often held on her day—Audrey fairs (hence tawdry), being as common as Michaelmas fairs. Of course both are in the Roman Calendar. *Malacoda:* St. Cuthbert was Bishop of Lindisfarne, not Ripon.

Subscriptions received (omitted last month) from *Fidelia* and *Esclairmonde;* and since, *Andromache* and *Vivia.*

Theodore, *Dubritia*, and others, should condense, and remember the rule 'not greatly exceeding five *pages* of foolscap.'

Bog-Oak cautions all Members to stamp their papers sufficiently, as some papers seem to have been lost through this cause.

Permission has been kindly granted to distribute among Members of the Monthly Packet C. H. S. the Address on the 'Study of Church History,' by the Lord Bishop of Oxford. As Bog-Oak has but a limited number, she will give it only to those who say, in their next paper, that they have not seen it, and who send an address.

Notices to Correspondents.

M. T. will find full details of the history of St. George in 'Curious Myths of the Middle Ages,' published by Rivington, 1874. His story (with a plate) is given in the xxii. vol. of the Archæologia, and is also to be met with in the Golden Legend of Jacques de Voragine.

The earliest acts quoted by the Bollandists are in Greek, and belong to the 6th century; they are fabulous. In fact, all that is known of St. George, is that there was such a martyr, that he was a native of Lydda, brought up in Cappadocia, that he entered the Roman army, and suffered a cruel death. Calvin was the first to question the reverence shown the saint. E. C. D'ARLEY.

E. H. would be grateful for any information as to Conrad Kiesel's picture called 'Clarissa.' Which Clarissa does it represent? and what are the words on the scroll she carries?

'Get up, sweet slugabed.'

This quotation, which was asked for in the December 'Monthly Packet,' is from a poem called 'Corinna's Maying,' by R. Herrick. It begins—

> 'Get up. Get up for shame! the blooming morn
> Upon her wings presents the god unshorn.'

There are six verses, of fourteen lines each. It is in the Hesperides, Morley's edition. E. C. D'ARLEY.

Kate would feel much obliged if any one would tell her of a simple play, containing *male* characters only, with very little scenery or accessories, suitable for acting by members of a Boys' Guild, who are aged from ten to fourteen.

We advise *Kate* to try 'Half-hour Plays' (Smith & Innes), or 'Ragged Robin' (Allen).

St. David was Archbishop of Menevia, A.D. 544. He is the Patron Saint of Wales, and is commemorated on the 1st March.

La Mascotte asks, who is the author of the poem 'Out of the mist, into the mist,' and information how to obtain it.

B. asks whether there is a poem describing Raffaelle seeing the Madonna di San Sisto in a vision before painting the picture. If so, the name and author.

The Monthly Packet.

JUNE, 1890.

TWO PENNILESS PRINCESSES.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRICE OF A GOOSE.

> 'We would have all such offenders cut off, and we give express charge that, in the marches through the country, there be nothing compelled from the villages.'
> —*King Henry V.*

THE Marquis of Suffolk's was a slow progress both in England and abroad, with many halts both on account of weather and of feasts and festivals. Cardinal Beaufort had hurried the party away from London partly in order to make the match with Margaret of Anjou irrevocable, partly for the sake of removing Eleanor of Scotland, the only maiden who had ever produced the slightest impression on the monastic-minded Henry of Windsor.

When once out of London there were, however, numerous halts on the road, two or three days of entertainment at every castle, and then a long delay at Canterbury to give time for Suffolk's retainers, and all the heralds, pursuivants, and other adjuncts of pomp and splendour, to join them. They were the guests of Archbishop Stafford, one of the peace party, and a friend of Beaufort and Suffolk, so that their entertainment was costly and magnificent, as befitted the mediæval notions of a high-born gentleman, Primate of all England. A great establishment for the chase was kept by almost all prelates as a necessity; and whenever the weather was favourable, hunting and hawking could be enjoyed by the Princesses and their suite. Indeed, Jean, if not in the saddle, was pretty certain to be visiting the hawks all the morning, or else playing at ball or some other sport with her cousins or some of the young gentlemen of Suffolk's train, who were all devoted to her.

Lady Drummond found that to try to win her to quieter occupations was in vain. The girl would not even try to learn French from Father Romuald by reading, though she would pick up words and phrases by laughing and chattering with the young knights who chanced to know it. But as by this time Dame Lilias had learnt that there were bounds that princely pride and instinct prevented from overpassing, she contented herself with seeing that there was fit attendance, either by her daughter Annis, Sir Patrick himself, or one or other of Lady Suffolk's ladies.

To some degree Eleanor shared in her sister's out-door amusements, but she was far more disposed to exercise her mind than her body. After having pined in weariness for want of intellectual food, her opportunities were delightful to her. Not only did she read with Father Romuald with intense interest the copy of the *bon* Sire Jean Froissart in the original which he borrowed from the Archbishop's library, but she listened with great zest to the readings which the Lady of Suffolk extracted from her chaplains and unwilling pages while the ladies sat at work, for the Marchioness, a grandchild of Geoffrey Chaucer, had a strong taste for literature. Moreover, from one of the choir Eleanor obtained lessons on the lute, as well as her beloved harp, and was taught to train her voice, and sing from 'pricke-song,' so that she much enjoyed this period of her journey.

Nothing could be more courteous and punctilious than the Marquis of Suffolk to the two Princesses, and indeed to every one of his own degree; but there was something of the *parvenu* about him, and, unlike the Duke of York or Archbishop Stafford, who were free, bright, and good-natured to the meanest persons, he was haughty and harsh to every one below the line of gentle blood, and in his own train he kept up a discipline, not too strict in itself, but galling in the manner in which it was enforced by those who imitated his example. By the time the suite was collected, Christmas and the festival of St. Thomas à Becket were so near that it would have been neglect of a popular saint to have left his shrine without keeping his day. And after the Epiphany, though the party did reach Dover in a day's ride, a stormy period set in, putting crossing out of the question, and detaining the suite within the massive walls of the Castle.

At last, on a brisk, windless day of frost, the crossing to Calais was effected, and there was another week of festivals spread by the hospitality of the Captain of Calais, where everything was as English as at Dover. When they again started on their journey, Suffolk severely insisted on the closest order, riding as travellers in a hostile country, where a misadventure might easily break the existing truce, although the territories of the Duke of Burgundy, through which their route chiefly lay, were far less unfavourable to the English than actual French countries; indeed, the Flemings were never willingly at war with the English, and some of the Burgundian nobles and knights had been on intimate terms with Suffolk. Still, he caused the heralds always to keep in advance, and allowed no stragglers behind the rearguard that came behind the long train of waggons loaded with much kitchen apparatus, and with splendid gifts for the bride and her family, as well as equipments for the wedding party, and tents for such of the troop as could not find shelter in the hostels or monasteries where the slowly-moving party halted for the night. It was unsafe to go on after the brief hours of daylight, especially in the neighbourhood of the Forest of Ardennes, for wolves might be near on the winter nights. It was thus that the first trouble arose with Sir Patrick Drummond's two volunteer followers. Ringan Raefoot had become in his progress a very different looking being from the wild creature who had come with 'Geordie of the Red Peel,' but there was the same heart in him. He had endured obedience to the Knight of Glenuskie as a Scot, and with the Duke of York and through England the discipline of the troop had not been severe; but Suffolk, though a courtly, chivalrous gentleman to his equals, had not the qualities of popularity, and chafed his inferiors.

There were signs of confusion in the cavalcade as they passed between some of the fertile fields of Namur, and while Suffolk was halting and about to send a squire to the rear to interfere, a couple of his retainers hurried up, saying, 'My lord, those Scottish thieves will bring the whole country down on us if order be not taken with them.'

Sir Patrick did not need the end of the speech to gallop off at full speed to the rear of all the waggons, where a crowd might be seen, and there was a perfect Babel of tongues, rising in only too intelligible shouts of rage. Swords and lances were flashing on one side among the horsemen, on the other stones were flying from an ever-increasing number of leather-jerkined men and boys, some of them with long knives, axes, and scythes.

George Douglas's high head seemed to be the main object of attack, and he had Ringan Raefoot before him across his horse, apparently retreating, while David, Malcolm, and a few more made charges on the crowd to guard him. When he was seen, there was a cry of which he could distinguish nothing but 'Ringan! Geordie! goose—Flemish hounds.'

Riding between, regardless of the stones, he shouted in the Burgundian French he had learnt in his campaigns, to demand the cause of the attack. The stones ceased, and the head man of the village, a stout peasant, came forward and complained that the varlet, as he called Ringan, had been stealing the village geese on their pond, and when they were about to do justice on him, yonder man-at-arms had burst in, knocked down and hurt several, and carried him off.

Before there had been time for further explanation, to Sir Patrick's great vexation, the marshal of the troop and his guard came up, and the complaint was repeated. George, at the same time, having handed Ringan over to some others of the Scots, rode up with his head very high.

'Sir Patrick Drummond,' said the Marshal stiffly, 'you know my lord's rules for his followers, as to committing outrages on the villeins of the country.'

'We are none of my Lord of Suffolk's following,' began Douglas; but Sir Patrick, determined to avoid a breach if possible, said—

'Sir Marshal, we have as yet heard but one side of the matter. If wrong have been done to these folk, we are ready to offer compensation, but we should hear how it has been——'

'Am I to see my poor laddie torn to bits, stoned, and hanged, by these savage loons,' cried George, 'for a goose's egg and an old gander?'

Of course his defence was incomprehensible to the Flemings, but on their side a man with a bound-up head and another limping were produced, and the head man spoke of more serious damage to others who could not appear, demanding both the aggressors to be dealt with, i.e. to be hanged on the next tree.

'These men are of mine, Master Marshal,' said Sir Patrick.

'My Lord can permit no violence by those under his banner,' said the Marshal stiffly. 'I must answer it to him.'

'Do so then,' said Sir Patrick. 'This is a matter for him.'

The Marshal, who had much rather have disposed of the Scottish thieves on his own responsibility, was forced to give way so far as to let the appeal be carried to the Marquis of Suffolk, telling the Flemings, in something as near their language as he could accomplish, that his lord was sure to see justice done, and that they should follow and make their complaint.

Suffolk sat on his horse, tall, upright, and angry. 'What is this I hear, Sir Patrick Drummond,' said he, 'that your miscreants of wild Scots have been thieving from the peaceful peasant folk, and then beating them and murdering them? I deemed you were a better man than to stand by such deeds and not give up the fellows to justice.'

'It were shame to hang a man for one goose,' said Sir Patrick.

'All plunder is worthy of death,' returned the Englishman. 'Your Border law may be otherwise, but 'tis not our English rule of honest men. And here's this other great lurdane knave been striking the poor rogues down right and left! A halter fits both.'

'My Lord, they are no subjects of England. I deny your rights over them.'

'Whoever rides in my train is under me, I would have you to know, sir.'

'Hark ye, my Lord of Suffolk,' said Sir Patrick, coming near enough to speak in an undertone, 'that lurdane, as you call him, is heir of a noble house in Scotland, come here on a young man's freak of chivalry. You will do no service to the peace of the realms if you give him up to these churls, for making in to save his servant.'

Before Sir Patrick had done speaking, while Suffolk was frowning grimly in perplexity, a wild figure, with blood on the face, rushed forth with a limping run, crying: 'Let the loons hang me and welcome, if they set such store by their lean old gander, but they shanna lay a finger on the Master.'

And he had nearly precipitated himself into the hands of the sturdy rustics, who shouted with exultation, but with two strides, Geordie caught him up. 'Peace, Ringan! They shall no more hang thee than me,' and he stood with one hand on Ringan's shoulder and his sword in the other, looking defiant.

'If he be a young gentleman, masquing, I am not bound to know it,' said Suffolk impatiently to Drummond; 'but if he will give up that rascal, and make compensation, I will overlook it.'

'Who touches my fellow does so at his peril,' shouted George, menacing with his sword.

'Peace, young man!' said Sir Patrick. 'Look here, my Lord of Suffolk, we Scots are none of your men. We need no favour of you English with our allies. There be enough of us to make our way through these peasants to the French border, so unless you let us settle the matter with a few crowns to these rascallions, we part company.'

'The ladies were entrusted to my charge,' began Lord Suffolk.

At that instant, however, both Jean and Eleanor came on the scene, riding fast, having in truth been summoned by Malcolm, who shrewdly suspected that thus an outbreak might be best averted.

It was Eleanor who spoke first, as the eldest. In spite of all her shyness, when her blood was up, she was all the princess.

'What is this, my Lord of Suffolk?' she said. 'If one of our following have transgressed, it is the part of ourselves and of Sir Patrick Drummond to see to it, as representing the King my brother.'

'Lady,' replied Suffolk, bowing low and doffing his cap, 'yonder ill-nurtured knave hath been robbing the country folk, and the—the man-at-arms there not only refuses to give him up to justice, but has hurt, well nigh slain, some of them in violently taking him from them. They ride in my train and I am responsible.'

Jean broke in: 'He only served the cowardly loons right. A whole crowd of the rogues to hang one poor laddie for one goose! Shame on a gentleman for hearkening to the foul-mouthed villains one moment. Come here, Ringan. King Jamie's sister will never see them harm thee.'

Perhaps Suffolk was not sorry to see a way out of the perplexity. 'Far be it from a knight to refuse a boon to a fair lady in her selle, farther still to *two* royal damsels. The lives are granted, so satisfaction in coin be made to yon clamorous hinds.'

'I do not call it a boon but a right,' said Eleanor gravely; 'nevertheless I thank you, my Lord Marquis.'

George would have thrown himself at their feet, but Jean coldly said, 'Spare thanks, sir. It was for my brother's right,' and she turned her horse away, and rode off at speed, while Eleanor could not help pausing to say, 'She is more blithe than she lists to own! Sir Patrick, what the fellows claim must come from my uncle's travelling purse.'

George's face was red. This was very bitter to him, but he could only say, 'It shall be repaid so soon as I have the power.'

The peasants meanwhile were trying to make the best bargain they could by representing that they were tenants of an abbey, so that the death of the gander was sacrilegious as well as being in Lent. To this, however, Sir Patrick turned a deaf ear: he threw them a couple of gold pieces, with which, as he told them, they were much better off than with either the live goose or the dead Ringan.

Suffolk had halted for the mid-day rest and was waiting for him till this matter was disposed of. 'Sir Patrick Drummond,' he said with some ceremony, 'this company of yours may be Scottish subjects, but while they are riding with me I am answerable for them. It may be the wont in Scotland, but it is not with us English, to let unnamed adventurers ride under our banner.'

'The young man is not unnamed,' said Sir Patrick, on his mettle.

'You know him?'

'I'll no say, but I have an inkling. My son David kenn'd him and answered for him when he joined himself to my following; nor has he hitherto done aught to discredit himself.'

'What is his name, or the name he goes by?'

'George Douglas.'

'H'm! Your Scottish names may belong to anyone, from your earls down to your herdboys; and they, forsooth, are as like as not to call themselves gentlemen.'

'And wherefore not, if theirs is gentle blood?' said Sir Patrick.

'Nay, now, Sir Patrick, stand not on your Scot's pride. Gentlemen all, if you will, but you gave me to understand that this was none of your barefoot gentlemen, and I ask if you can tell who he truly is?'

'I have never been told, my Lord, and I had rather you put the question to himself than to me.'

'Call him then, an' so please you.'

Sir Patrick saw no alternative save compliance; and he found Ringan undergoing a severe rating, not unaccompanied with blows from the wood of his master's lance. The perfect willingness to die for one another was a mere natural incident, but the having transgressed, and caused such a serious scrape made George very indignant and inflict condign punishment. 'Better fed than he had ever been in his life, the rogue' (and he looked it, though he muttered, 'A bannock and a sup of barley brose were worth the haill of their greasy beeves!'). 'Better fed than ever before. Couldn't the daft loon keep the hands of him off poor folks' bit goose. In Lent, too!' (by far the gravest part of the offence).

George did, however, transfer Ringan's explanation to Sir Patrick, and make some apology. A nest of goose eggs apparently unowned had been too much for him, incited further by a couple of English horseboys, who were willing to share goose eggs for supper, and let the Scotsman bear the wyte of it. The goose had been nearer than expected, and summoned her kin; the gander had shown fight; the geese had gabbled, the gooseherd and his kind were much nearer than expected, the horseboys had made off; Ringan, impeded by his struggle with the ferocious gander, was caught; and Archie had come up just in time to see him pricked with goads and axes to a tree, where a halter was making ready for him. Of course, without asking questions, George made to his rescue, pushing his horse among the angry crew, and striking right and left, and equally of course the other Scots came to his assistance.

Sir Patrick agreed that he could not have done otherwise, though better things might have been hoped of Ringan by this time.

'But,' said he, 'there's not an end yet of the coil. Here has my Lord of Suffolk been speiring after your name and quality, till I told him he must ask at you and not at me.'

'Tell'd you the dour meddling Englishman my name?' asked George.

'I told him only what ye told me yerself. In that there was no lie. But bethink you, Royal maidens dinna come to speak for lads without a cause.'

George's colour mounted high in his sunburnt, freckled cheek.

'Kens—ken they, trow ye, Sir Pate?'

'Cannie folk, even lassies, can ken mair than they always tell,' said the knight of Glenuskie. 'Yonder is my Lord Marquis, as they ca' him; so bethink you weel how you comport yerself with him, and my counsel is to tell him the full truth. He is a dour man with underlings, whom he views as made not of the same flesh and blood with himself, but he is the very pink of courtesy to men of his own degree.'

'Set him up,' quoth the heir of the Douglas, with a snort. 'His own degree, indeed! scarce even a knight's son!'

'What he deems his own degree, then,' corrected Sir Patrick; 'but he holds himself full of chivalry to them, and loves a spice of the errant knight; ye may trust his honour. And mind ye,' he added, laughing, 'I've never been *told* your name and quality.'

Which the Master of Angus returned with an equally canny laugh. The young man, as he approached the Marquis, drew his head up, straightened his tall form, brushed off the dust that obscured the bloody heart on his breast, and altogether advanced with a step and bearing far more like the great Earl's son than the man-at-arms of the Glenuskie following; his eyes bespoke equality or more as they met those of William de la Pole, and yet there was that in the glance which forbade the idea of insolence, so that Suffolk, instead of remaining seated, rose to meet him and took him aside, standing as they talked.

'Sir Squire,' he said, 'for such, I understand your degree in chivalry to be.'

'I have not won my spurs,' said George.

'It is not our rule to take to foreign courts gentlemen from another realm unknown to us,' proceeded Suffolk, with much civility; 'therefore, unless any vow of chivalry binds you, I should be glad to know who it is who does my banner the honour of riding in its company for a time. If a secret, it is safe with me.'

George gave his name.

'That is the name of one of the chief nobles in Scotland,' said Suffolk; 'then I see before me his son?'

George bowed.

'Then, my Lord Douglas, am I permitted to ask wherefore this mean disguise. Is it for some vow of chivalry, and for that which is the guerdon of chivalry,' the Marquis added in a lower, softer tone, which, however, extremely chafed the proud young Scot, all the more that he felt himself blushing.

'My Lord,' he said, 'I am not bound to render a reason to any save my father, from whom I hope for letters shortly.'

To his further provocation Suffolk smiled meaningly, and answered—

'I understand. But if my Lord Douglas would honour my suite by assuming the place that befits him, I should be happy that aught of mine should serve——'

'I am beholden to you, my Lord, for the offer,' replied George, somewhat roughly. 'Whatever I make use of must be my father's or my own. All I crave of you is to keep my secret, and not make me the common talk. Have I your license to depart?'

Wherewith, tall, irate, and shamefaced, the Master of Angus stalked away to meet David Drummond, to whom he confided his disgusts.

'The parlous fulebody! As though I were like to make myself a mere sport for ballad-mongers, such as Lady Elleen is always mooning after; or as if I would stoop to borrow a following of the English blackguard, to bolster up my state like King Herod in a mystery-play. If my father lists, he may send me out a band, but the Douglas shall have Douglas's men, or none at all.'

David approved the sentiment, but added—

'Ye could win to Jeanie if ye took your right place.'

'What good would that do me while she is full of her fine daffing, singing, clacking, English knights, that would only gibe at the red-haired Scot? Let her wait to see what the Red Douglas' hand can do in time of need! But, Davie, you that can speak to her, let her know how deeply I thank her for what she did even now on my behalf, or rather on puir Ringan's, and that I am trebly bound to her service though I make no minstrel fule's work.'

David delivered his message, but did not obtain much by it for his friend's satisfaction, for Jeanie only tossed her head and answered—

'Does the gallant cock up his bonnet because he thinks it was for his sake. It was Elleen's doing there, firstly; and next, wad'na we have done the like for the meanest of Jamie's subjects?'

'Dinna credit her, Davie,' said Eleanor. 'Ye should have seen her start in her saddle, and wheel round her palfrey at Malcolm's first word.'

'It was na for him,' replied Jean hotly. 'They dinna hang the like of him for twisting a goose's neck; it was for the puir leal laddie; and ye may tak that to him.'

'Shall I, Elleen?' asked David, with a twinkle in his eye of cousinly teasing.

'An' ye do not, I shall proclaim ye in the lists at Nanci as a corbie messenger and mansworn squire, unworthy of your spurs,' threatened Jeanie, in all good-humour however.

Suffolk, baffled in his desire to patronise the young Master of Angus, examined both Sir Patrick and Lady Drummond as far as their caution would allow, telling that the youth had confessed his rank and admitted the cause—making inquiry whether the match would be held suitable in Scotland, and why it had not taken place there—a matter difficult to explain, since it did not merely turn upon the young lady's ambition—which would have gone for nothing, but on the danger to the crown of offending rival houses. Suffolk had a good deal about him of the flashy side of chivalry, and loved its brilliance and romance; he was an honourable man, and the weak point about him was that he never understood that knighthood should respect men of meaner birth. He was greatly flattered by the idea of having the eldest son of the great Earl of Angus riding as an unknown man-at-arms in his troop, and on the way likewise to the most chivalrous of kings. His scheme would have been to equip the youth fully with horse and arms, and at some brilliant tourney, see him carry all before him, like Du Guesclin in his boyhood, and that the *éclat* of the affair should reflect itself upon his sponsor. But there were two difficulties in the way, the first that the proud young Scot showed no intention of being beholden to any Englishman, and secondly, that the tall ungainly youth did not look as if he had attained to the full strength or management of his own limbs; and though in five or ten years' time, he might be a giant in actual warfare, he did not appear at all likely to be a match for the highly-trained champions of the tilt-yard. Moreover, he was not a knight as yet, and on sounding Sir Patrick, it was elicited that he was likely to deem it high treason to be dubbed by any hand save that of his King or his father.

So the Marquis could only feel sagacious, and utter a hint or two before the ladies which fell the more short, since he was persuaded, by Eleanor's having been the foremost in the defence, that she was the object of the quest; and he now and then treated her to hints which she was slow to understand, but which exasperated while they amused her sister.

The journey was so slow that it was not until the fourth week in Lent that they were fairly in Lorraine. It had of course been announced by couriers, and at Thionville a very splendid herald reached them, covered all over with the blazonry of Jerusalem and the Two Sicilies, to say nothing of Provence and Anjou. He brought letters from King René, explaining that he and his daughters were *en route* from Provence, and he therefore designated a nunnery where he requested that the Scottish princesses and their ladies would deign to be entertained, and a monastery where my Lord Marquis of Suffolk and his suite would be welcomed, and where they were requested to remain till Easter week, by which time the King of France, the Dauphin and Dauphiness would be near at hand, and there could be a grand entrance into Nanci.

Of course there was nothing to be done but to obey, though the Englishmen muttered that the delay was in order to cast the expense upon the rich abbeys, and to muster all the resources of Lorraine and Provence to cover the poverty of the many-titled King.

The abbey where the gentlemen were lodged was so near Nanci that it was easy to ride into the city and make inquiries whether any tidings had arrived from Scotland; but nothing had come from thence, for either the Princesses, Sir Patrick, or Geordie of the Red Peel, so that the strange situation of the latter must needs continue as long as he insisted on being beholden for nothing to the English upstart, as he scrupled not to call Lord Suffolk, whose new-fashioned French title was an offence in Scottish ears.

The ladies on their side had not the relaxation of these expeditions. The Abbey was a large and wealthy one, but decidedly provincial. Only the Lady Abbess and one sister could speak 'French of Paris,' the others used a dialect so nearly German that Lady Suffolk could barely understand them, and the other ladies, whose French was not strong, could hold no conversation with them.

To insular minds, whether Scottish or English, every deviation of the Gallican ritual from their own was a sore vexation. If Lady Drummond had devotion enough not to be distracted by the variations, the young ladies certainly had not, and Jean very decidedly giggled during some of the most solemn ceremonies, such as the creeping to the cross, the large carved cross in the middle of the graveyard, to which all in turn went upon their knees on Good Friday and kissed it.

Last year, at this season, they had been shut up in their prison-castle, and had not shared in any of these ceremonies; and Eleanor tried to think of King Henry and Sister Esclairmonde, and how they were throwing their hearts into the great thoughts of the day, and she felt distressed at being infected by Jean's suppressed laughter at the movements of the fat Abbess, and at the extraordinary noises made by the younger nuns with clappers, as demonstrations against Judas on the way to the Easter Sepulchre.

She was so much shocked at herself that she wanted to confess; but Father Romuald had gone with the male members of the party, and the chaplain did not half understand her French, though he gave her absolution.

Meantime all the nuns were preparing Easter eggs, whereof there was a great exchange the next day, when the Mass was as splendid as the resources of the Abbey could furnish, and all were full of joy and congratulation, the sense of oneness for once inspiring all.

Moreover, after Mass, Sir Patrick and an Englishman rode over with tidings that King René had sent a messenger who was on the Tuesday to guide them all to a glade where the King hoped to welcome the ladies as befitted their rank and beauty, and likewise to meet the royal travellers from Bourges, so that all might make their entry into Nanci together.

The King himself, it was reported, did nothing but ride backwards and forwards between Nanci and the convent where he had halted, arranging the details of the procession, and of the open-air feast at the rendezvous upon the way.

'I hope,' said Lady Suffolk, 'that King René's confections will not be as full of rancid oil as those of the good Sisters. I know not which was most distasteful—their Lenten Fast or their Easter Feast. We have certes, done our penance this Lent!'

To which the rest of the ladies could not but agree, though Lady Drummond felt it somewhat treasonable to the good nuns, their entertainers; and both she and Eleanor recollected how differently Esclairmonde would have felt the matter, and how little these matters of daily fare would have concerned her.

'To-day we shall see her!' exclaimed Eleanor, springing to the floor, as early on a fine spring morning the ladies in the guest-chamber of the nunnery began to bestir themselves at the sound of one of the many convent bells. 'They are at Toul, and we shall meet this afternoon. I have not slept all night for thinking of it.'

'No, and hardly let me sleep,' said Jean, slowly sitting up in bed. 'Thou hast waked me so often that I shall be pale and heavy-eyed for the pageant.'

'Little fear of that, my bonnie bell,' said old Christie, laughing.

'Besides,' said Eleanor, 'nobody will fash themselves to look at us in the midst of the pageant. There will be the King to see, and the bride. Oh, I wish we were not to ride in it, and could see it instead at our ease.'

'Thou wast never meant for a princess,' said Jean, 'Christie, Annis, for pity's sake, see till her. She is busking up her hair just as was gude enough for the old nuns, but no for kings and queens.'

'I hate the horned cap, in which I feel like a cow, and methought Meg wad feel the snood a sight for sair een,' said Eleanor.

'Meg indeed! Thou must frame thy tongue to Madame la Dauphine.'

'Before the lave of them, but not with sweet Meg herself.'

'Our sister behoves to have learnt what suits her station, and winna bide sic ways from an ower forward sister. Dinna put us all to shame, and make the folk trow we came from some selvage land,' said Jean, tossing her head.

'Hast ever seen me carry myself unworthy of King James's daughter?' proudly demanded Eleanor.

'Nay now, bairnies, fash not yoursells that gate,' interfered old Christie; 'nae fear but Lady Elleen will be douce and canny enow when folks are there to see. She kens what fits a king's daughter.'

Jean made a little hesitation over kirtles and hoods, but fortunately ladies, however royal, had no objection to wearing the same robes twice, and both she and her sister were objects to delight the eyes of the crowding and admiring nuns, when they mounted their palfreys in the quadrangle, and, attended by the Lady of Glenuskie and her daughter, rode forth with the Marchioness of Suffolk at the great gateway to join the calvacade, headed by Suffolk and Sir Patrick.

After about two miles' riding on a woodland road, they became aware of fitful strains of music and a continuous hum of voices, heard through the trees, and presently a really beautiful scene opened before them, as the trees seemed to retreat, so as to unfold a wide level space, further enclosed by brilliant tapestry hangings, their scarlet, blue, gold and silver hues glittering in an April sun, and the fastenings concealed by garlands of spring flowers. An awning of rich gold embroidery on a green ground was spread so as to shelter a cloth glittering with plate, and bestrewn with flowers; horses, in all varieties of ornamental housings, were being led about, there was a semicircle of musicians in the rear, and as soon as the guests came in sight, there came forward, doffing his embroidered and jewelled cap, a gentleman of middle stature and of exceeding grace and courtesy, whose demeanour, no less than the attendance around him, left no doubt that this was no other than René, Duke of Anjou and of Lorraine, Count of Provence, and King of the Two Sicilies and of Jerusalem.

'Welcome,' he exclaimed in French, 'welcome, fair and royal maidens; welcome, noble lord, the representative of our dear brother and son of England. Deign on your journey to partake of the humble and rural fare of the poor minstrel shepherd.'

Wherewith the music broke out in strains of welcome from the grove, with voices betweenwhiles. René himself assisted each princess to dismount, and respectfully kissed her on the cheek as she stood on the ground. Then, taking a hand of each, he led them to a great chestnut-tree, the shade of whose branches was assisted by hangings of blue embroidered with white, beneath which cushions, mantles, and seats were spread, and a bevy of ladies in bright garments stood. From these came forward two beautiful young girls, with fair complexions and flowing golden hair, scarcely confined by the bands whence transparent veils descended. King René presented them as his two daughters, Yolande and Margaret, to the two Scottish maidens, and there were kindly as well as courtly embraces on either side. The Lady of Glenuskie, as a king's grand-daughter, with Annis and Lady Suffolk, had likewise been led up to take their places; the four royal maidens were seated together. Yolande, the most regularly beautiful, but with an anxious look on her face, talked to Eleanor of her journey; Margaret, who had one of those very simple, innocent-looking child-faces that sometimes cover the mask of immense energy of character, was more absent and inattentive to her duties as hostess; moreover, she and Jean did not understand one another's language so well as did the other two. Delicate little cakes, and tall Venice glasses, spirally ornamented, and containing light wines, were served to them on the knee by a tall, large, fair-haired youth, who was named to them as the Duke Sigismund, of Alsace and the Tyrol.

Jean had time to look about, and heartily wish that her beautiful flaxen hair was loose, and not encumbered with the rolled headgear with two projecting horns against which Elleen had rebelled, since York and even London were evidently behind the fashion. Margaret's hair was bound with a broad band of daisies, and Yolande's with violets, both in allusion to their names, Yolande being the French corruption of Violante, her Provençal name, in allusion to the Golden violet. Jean thought of the Scottish thistle, and studied the dresses, tight-fitting 'cotte hardis' of bright, deep, soft, rose colour, edged with white fur, and white skirts embroidered with their appropriate flowers. She wondered how soon this could be imitated, casting a few glances at Duke Sigismund, who stood waiting, as if desirous of attracting Yolande's attention. Eleanor, on the other hand, even while answering Yolande, had a feeling as if she had arrived at the completion of the very vision which she had imagined on the dreary tower of Dunbar. Here was the warm spring sun, shining on a scene of unequalled beauty and brilliancy, set in the spring foliage and blossom, whence, as if to rival the human performers, gushes of nightingales' song came in every interval. Hearing Eleanor's eager question whether that were the nightingale whose liquid trillings she heard, King René realised that the Scottish maidens knew not the song and signed to the minstrels to cease for a time, then came and sat on a cushion beside the young lady, and enjoyed her admiration.

'Ah!' she said, 'that is the king of the minstrel birds.'

He smiled. 'The royal lady then has her orders and ranks for the birds.'

'Oh, yes. If the Royal Eagle is the king, and the falcon is the true knight, the nightingale and mavis, merle and lark, are the minstrels. And the lovely seagull, oh, how call you it?—with the long white floating wings rising and falling, is the graceful dancer.'

'Guifette,' René gave the word, 'or in Provence Rondinel della mar—hirondelle de la mer.'

'Swallow! Ah, the pilgrim birds, who visit the Holy Land.'

'Lady, you should be of our court of the troubadours,' said René; 'your words should be a poem.'

He was called away at the moment, and craved her license so politely that the chivalrous minstrel king seemed to Elleen all she had dreamt of. The whole was perfect, nothing wanting save that for which her heart was all the time beating high, the presence of her beloved sister Margaret. It was as if a scene out of a romance of fairyland had suddenly taken reality, and she more than once closed her eyes, and squeezed her hands to try whether she was awake.

A fanfaron of trumpets came on the wind, and all were on the alert, while Eleanor's heart throbbed so that she could hardly stand, and caught at Margaret's arm, as she murmured with a gasp, 'My sister! My sister!'

'Ah! you are happy to meet once more,' said Margaret. 'The saints only know whether Yolande and I shall ever see one another's faces again when once I am carried away to your dreary England.'

'England is not mine, lady,' said Eleanor, rather sharply. 'We reckon the English as our bitterest foes.'

'You have come with an Englishman though,' said Margaret, 'whom I am to take for my husband,' and she laughed a gay, innocent laugh. 'A grizzled old knight, whom I am not like to mistake for my true spouse. Have you seen him? What like is he?'

'The gentlest and sweetest of kings,' returned Eleanor; 'as fond of all that is good and fair and holy as is your own royal father.'

Margaret coughed a little. 'My husband should be a gallant, warlike knight,' she said, 'such as was this king's father.'

'Oh, see!' cried Eleanor. 'I saw the glitter of the spears through the trees. There's another blast of the trumpets! Oh! oh! it is a gallant sight! If only Jamie, my little brother, could see it! It stirs one's blood.'

'Ah! yes, Elleen,' cried Jean. 'This is something to have come for.'

'And Margaret, sweet Madge,' repeated Eleanor to herself, in her native Scotch, while King René's trumpets, harps, and hautbois burst forth with an answering peal, so exciting her that her yellow-brown eyes sparkled and the colour rose in her cheeks, giving her a strange beauty of the eager spirit. Duke Sigismund turned and gazed at her in surprise, and an old herald who was waiting near observed, 'Is that the daughter of the captive King of Scotland? She has his very countenance and bearing.'

The trumpeters and other attendants, bearing the blue-lilied banner of France, appeared among the trees, and dividing, formed a lane for the advance of the royal personages. King René went forward to meet them, foremost so as to be ready to hold the stirrup for his sister the Queen of France. Duke Sigismund seemed about to give his hand to the Infanta Violante, as the Provençaux called Yolande, but she was beforehand with him, linking her arm into Jean's, while Margaret took Eleanor's, and said in her ear, 'The great awkward German! He is come here to pay his court to Yolande, but she will none of him. She has better hopes.'

Eleanor hardly attended, for her whole soul was bent on the party arriving. King Charles, riding on a handsome bay horse, closely followed by a conveyance such as was called in England a whirlycote, from which the Queen was handed out by her brother, and then, on a sorrel palfrey, in a blue gold embroidered riding suit—could that be Margaret of Scotland? The long reddish-yellow hair and the tall figure had a familiar look. King René was telling her something as he helped her to alight, and with one spring, regardless of all, and of all ceremony, she sprang forward. 'My wee Jeanie! My Elleen! My titties! Mine ain wee things,' she cried in her native tongue, as she embraced them by turns, as if she would have devoured them, with a gush of tears.

Though these were times of great state and ceremony, yet they were also very demonstrative times, when tears and embracings were expected of near kindred; and indeed, the King and Queen were equally occupied with their brother and nieces; but presently Eleanor heard a low voice observe, with a sort of sarcastic twang, 'If Madame has sufficiently satiated her tenderness, perhaps she will remember the due of others.' Margaret started as if stung, and Eleanor, looking up, beheld a face, young but sharp, and with a keen, hard set look in the narrow eyes, contracted brow, and thin lips, that made her feel as though the serpent had found his way into her paradise. Hastily turning, Margaret presented her sisters to her husband, who bowed, and kissed each with those strange thin lips that again made Eleanor shudder, perhaps because of his compliment, 'We are graced by these ladies, in whom we have another Madame la Dauphine, as well as an errant beauty.'

Jean appropriated the last words, but Elleen felt sure that the earlier ones were ironical, both to her and to the Dauphiness, on whose cheeks they brought a flush. The two kings, however, turned to receive the sisters, and nothing could be kinder than the tone of King Charles and Queen Marie towards the sisters of their good daughter, as they termed the Dauphiness, who on her side was welcomed by René as the sweet niece, sharer of his tastes, who brought minstrelsy and poetry in her train.

'Trust her for that, my fair uncle,' said her husband, in a cold dry tone.

All the royal personages sat down on the cushions spread on the grass to the 'rural fare,' as King René called it, which he had elaborately prepared for them, while the music sounded from the trees in welcome.

All was, as the kind prince announced, without ceremony, and he placed Lord Suffolk, as the representative of Henry VI., next to the young Infanta Margaret, and contrived that the Dauphiness should sit between her two sisters, whose hands she clasped from time to time within her own in an ecstasy of delight, while inquiries came from time to time, low breathed in her native tongue, for wee Mary and Jamie and baby Annaple. 'The very sound of your tongues is music to my lugs,' she said. 'And how much mair when ye speak mine ain bonnie Scotch, sic as I never hear save by times when one archer calls to another. Jeanie, you favour our mother. 'Tis gude for ye! I am blithe one of ye is na like puir Marget!'

'Dinna say that,' cried Jean, in an access of feeling. ''Tis hame, and it's hame to see sic a sonsie Scots face—and it minds me of my blessed father.'

It was true that Margaret and Eleanor both were thorough Scotswomen, and with the expressive features, the auburn colouring and tall figures of their father; but there was for the rest a melancholy contrast between them, for while Elleen had the eager, hopeful, lively healthfulness of early youth, giving a glow to her countenance, and animation to the lithe but scarcely-formed figure, Margaret, with the same original mould, had the pallor and puffiness of ill-health in her complexion, and a largeness of growth more unsatisfactory than leanness, and though her face was lighted up and her eyes sparkled with the joy of meeting her sisters, there were lines about the brow and round the mouth ill suited to her age, which was little over twenty years.

(*To be continued.*)

A STORM IN A TEA-CUP.

BY SELINA GAYE.

XIV.

AFTER THE STORM.

FOR some days Dulcie was very ill, too ill to ask questions or to know how the time went, and too ill to be questioned if any one had wished to question her. But she could not be quite as much on her guard as usual, and what with that and talking in her sleep, she had let out a good deal more than she was aware, of what had been troubling her for the past few weeks.

It was very odd to have suffered so much from such a nightmare and then to wake up and find, not that it was gone, but that actually it was not terrible at all. She could not understand it in the least; but when she began to care again to hear what was going on, Mr. Beaumont's name was constantly mentioned, and he seemed to be coming and going as if he quite belonged to Plancöet. She heard that Uncle Russell liked him, and had been very glad of him as a companion in the evening while Cousin Hester was so much engaged upstairs, and then he had been very kind and useful in taking the boys out, and he had played croquet and started cricket in the meadow, with Jean-Baptiste to help to field; in short, there was no end to his many admirable qualities. It was all most astonishing, and Dulcie was pondering the matter deeply one afternoon, when Fando came up to see how she was getting on and to say that she was going to sit with her while the rest went out with Mr. Beaumont.

'I'm very sorry, I wish you would go too,' said Dulcie.

'Do you know that that is not at all polite? I suppose you would come and sit with me? Well then, why should not I sit with you? I shall get on with my work, and you needn't talk a bit more than you like; but you are a good deal better to-day, aren't you? and you are going to get up to tea if you like. Would you like a book?'

But no, Dulcie for once in her life did not care to read, and preferred lying still watching Fando's busy fingers and hearing her talk. And Fando had a good deal to say, for there had been a letter from Aunt Mary, and she and Uncle John were travelling about, and would not be coming to Plancöet for three or four weeks yet, and Cousin Hester was quite glad, because she hoped that by that time

Dulcie would be strong and well again, and they would still be in time for the children's fête. Judy, it seemed, had been very anxious to '*do* something,' and not 'just plainly give the things' they had been preparing, and Mademoiselle had seized the opportunity to suggest that her dear pupils should show how well they had profited by her instructions by acting a French play to amuse the company, and Judy had said that it would be better still to make Perrine's children and the rest act too, it would be such a nice way of giving them their new clothes.

'And what do you think she wants to do?' Fando went on; 'why, "Cinderella," only "Cinderella" quite altered; she says the ball might be out-of-doors like the one at La Fontaine, and they could all dance and not have anything to say. The worst of it is about the shoe, you see! The fairy godmother would never give glass slippers for dancing in the open air, more especially if Cinderella is to drive in the donkey-cart, which is Judy's notion, and if she is to wear wooden-soled shoes, they are so much alike that I don't think the Prince would take much notice, do you, if one were left behind? The thing is, Judy says that there is such a very large pumpkin in the garden, it seems quite to have grown on purpose, and it is such a pity to waste it. But then we could not have it here in front of the house, or we should have a crowd, and we couldn't have it indoors, because of the donkey! So I think Mademoiselle is going to find a better play, with something for us all to do and perhaps a dance, for that isn't a bad idea, and they would enjoy it ever so much!'

'But I can't act! I never could, even in charades; she won't want me, will she?' asked Dulcie in alarm.

'Not if you had rather not; but I am sure you would do as well as I.'

'No, I shouldn't! I—but I don't suppose you know what it feels like to be always wanting to get into corners, do you?' said Dulcie seriously, and Fando had to admit that she didn't. 'I can't help it,' she went on, 'and I can't help getting red, I wish I could! When I was quite little, eight or nine years old, I remember I always thought I had done something wrong, whenever they called me; and then I got red, and sometimes I heard them say that I *must* have been doing something because I looked so guilty, and then I dare say I got redder still.'

'Poor Dulcie! it was very miserable for you, and very unfair; but you are going to be happy now with Aunt Mary, I'm sure, and she won't think anything of it, if you do get red, and I dare say you'll leave it off. People oughtn't to judge like that.'

'No, but they do——' and Dulcie hesitated a moment and then went on, 'I believe that Judy thinks that I have been—telling stories—and Cousin Hester looks at me——'

Dulcie was still feeling weak and low, and if she had been devoted to Cousin Hester before, she was still more devoted now after all her kind nursing, and the thought that she suspected her of untruth made her so miserable that the words ended in a sob.

'Dear Dulcie,' said Fando, kissing her, 'Cousin Hester never thinks anything unkind, and she always trusts people, until she *can't*. You mustn't make yourself miserable or your head will ache again, and then she will say I am a bad nurse and not to be trusted, and you wouldn't like that, would you?'

Fando soothed and petted and comforted, but she was so strongly of opinion that Dulcie could never be really comfortable until she had explained herself, that she presently said, 'I don't want to know anything at all about it if you had rather not, but you have said things that perhaps you don't remember, and once or twice you talked in your sleep, and then of course Mr. Beaumont told Uncle Russell that he was in the hotel at Dinard and knew Aunt Mary, and had walked home with you one day, so you see——'

Yes, Dulcie did see! There was no longer any secret to keep, and before Marie came to help her to get up she had told Fando everything. Indeed, when once she had begun, it was such a relief to pour it all out, that she talked on and on, and so eagerly, that Fando was half afraid it would be too much for her.

'But I don't think it really hurt her half as much as keeping it all to herself, and wondering,' said she to Cousin Hester; 'in fact she went to sleep quite comfortably after her tea, and she said she wished you to know it all. She is so dreadfully afraid that you should think she has been deceitful, and she is so very sorry about that evening at La Fontaine, when I told Uncle Russell that she didn't know anybody and she did not say anything. And she was good about Judy, but I really do believe that if she had not teased so, Dulcie would have told long ago; only the longer she waited the harder it was, and the more she thought we shouldn't believe her. I shall try and make Judy understand that a great deal of it really has been her fault, for I think she ought, and Dulcie was only like my *sincere* little girl when she said that Mr. Beaumont was not her "friend," because she had not known him at all for more than a fortnight, and then it was chiefly seeing him at the table d'hôte, and she does not think that at all enough to make him a friend. She does so hope that he will be gone before she comes down again, for she doesn't want ever to see him any more! I believe she is half-inclined now to think that he isn't honest to be coming here without telling you what he is going, or was going, to do. In fact, she doesn't know *what* to think! It did startle her so to hear Uncle Russell speak to him that morning, as if they were friends; and I think, you know, she feels a little as if she had been taken in and had had all her trouble for nothing. She was even fancying that he had known you and Uncle Russell all the time, and knew that she was coming here and everything, and was just laughing at her, until I told her that you knew nothing about him until the ball-night. I think it all comes a good deal of her reading so much and not having any one to talk to about it; and she happened to meet him just when she was full of the Revolution. Oh! and Cousin Hester, last of all, do you know, she told me what he had said about the "White Lady," and I thought it was very good of her, for she is desperately afraid of being laughed at about it, and she never thought about such things before, but she did see somebody, she says, and so did Willie, and she did not put it into his head at all. I wish we could find out who it was! It is some one taller than you, but the dress is very much like one of yours.'

'Perhaps it *is* one of mine, borrowed for the occasion, though I can't think that any one here would play such a foolish practical joke. Well, I shall let her know that you have told me, because she will be more comfortable, but there must not be any more talking to-night.'

From that day Dulcie improved steadily if not rapidly, and though her face was still white and thin, and her eyes looked rather unnaturally large, her whole expression was much more cheerful, and it seemed as if a weight had been taken off her mind.

Nevertheless, Judy was a good deal shocked the first time that she was admitted to see her, when she had been promoted to sitting up in a large chair near the window; and after kissing her rather timidly, she surveyed her for a few seconds without speaking, and then said slowly, 'I did not know that you had been as ill as all *that!* Well, I won't call you Dowsabel and Dulcibella any more, if I can remember not to forget—I really won't.'

'Oh! but I sha'n't mind now,' said Dulcie, with a smile, 'so you need not mind about remembering.'

'But I shall! Besides,' said Judy, with much frankness, 'there is no good if you don't mind, you see!—but I don't mean to! and—I am sorry. I say, Dulcie, have you got that ribbon here?—you know, the one you bought the day——'

'Yes, I know,' said Dulcie, her face crimson in a moment, 'and you thought I had not spoken the truth?'

'Yes, I did; I don't understand those squibbling fractions, and you did shake hands, didn't you?'

'Yes,' and Dulcie's head bent lower and lower, as she added, 'it was my own fault, and—I meant to be true—but I am afraid I wasn't, for I did want you to think what was not true.'

'Well, of course, I know now that he isn't a regular sort of *Great* Briton; he is only a *Little* Briton; and if you want more than a fortnight to hatch a friend, I suppose you can have it! But if you have got that ribbon, and if you don't want it, may I have it for Nanon now? She hasn't got one yet, and I'll tell her that you bought it ever so long ago, and it was my fault that she didn't have it.' And Dulcie was only too glad to tell Judy where it was to be found.

'You are going to make haste and come downstairs again, aren't you? Mr. Beaumont is so jolly, and we have all been playing "crickets," and he asks about you every day. But, do you know, I think Cousin Hester has been scolding him, for he got nearly as red as you one day, and I heard him say that it was his fault, and I suppose he meant for coming up the drive just at that very exact moment, but then he could not know that you were so startish and that you were planting water-lilies, could he? Do you know,' Judy went on, earnestly and confidentially, 'I thought a wicked thought about you? I thought it was your conscience that pushed you in; and now I am afraid it was me and Mr. Beaumont, but I didn't mean to, and I am very sorry, and I expect by the manner of him that he is too. The boys were horrid about it, and they said I gave you a push, a real *seen* push, I mean; you know I didn't, but Fando says it was an unseen push, and that sounds worse, only then I did not know it.'

'I think it was my own fault most of all,' said Dulcie candidly, 'but I did not know it either.'

'People do a great many things unbeknown,' said Judy reflectively. 'When you come down again, will you just *tell* the boys I didn't push you? They'll believe you, and though I helped, I did not mean to, and that does make some difference, doesn't it? And'—Judy got rather red in the face—'they *have* teased so about it! It was just dreadful, until Cousin Hester found out and stopped them.'

'I am very sorry, Judy, I am indeed, and of course I'll tell them; but they don't believe it really.'

'And, Dulcie, Fando said I was not to tease about it, but *would* you mind telling me what you saw in the avenue? I do want to know, and I mustn't talk to Willie, and besides, he only saw it out of the corner of his eye, and that's no good at all. *Do* you mind?'

Dulcie did mind, for she would much rather not have talked of the subject at all, least of all to Judy, but she wanted to please her, if only by way of showing that she was ready to be good friends, and evidently this was a subject in which Judy took a deep interest.

So Dulcie plucked up courage and told her all from beginning to end, and Judy listened with the most gratifying and serious attention.

'H-m!' she said, when the narration came to a close. 'Well, I should like to know who it is who comes straying about in such a heedless way. Now, look here, Dulcie, you make haste and get well, and then we'll find out, you and I together, you see if we don't, unless she gives up coming just to spite us, now that Mr. Beaumont is here; but I—*don't think she will*, unless—well, she might, if *Cousin Hester were to catch cold!*'

'If Cousin Hester were to catch cold? What do you mean? What has that to do with it? It wasn't Cousin Hester, I am quite sure. It wasn't her voice any more than an owl's.'

'No, I suppose not; but still I think it might make a difference if she were to catch cold.'

Judy looked mysterious, but she would not say any more, only she was very earnest in insisting that they would find it out, whatever it was, as soon as ever Dulcie was well enough, and she knew that Cousin Hester talked of her coming down for a little while to begin with in a day or two. This coming down poor Dulcie dreaded very much, and after she had said that she 'would rather wait a little longer' a good many times, Cousin Hester began to think that the sooner a beginning was made the better. She had let Dulcie know that Fando had told her the whole history of her trouble, and had said that they would talk it over when she was better, and she thought that now the time had come.

"I don't want to hurry you, dear, if you really don't feel strong enough; but it is not *quite* that, is it?' she said kindly.

There was a wood fire blazing on the hearth in Dulcie's room and casting fitful gleams of light on the dark wainscot, the curtains were drawn before both window and bed, and perhaps Cousin Hester, who seemed to know everything of this sort, guessed how much easier it was to talk by firelight, for she had not yet lighted the candles.

'It is not quite that, is it?' she said, drawing her chair up to the fire, and putting down her knitting. And then she went on to say how she quite understood that Dulcie was ashamed to meet both Uncle Russell and Mr. Beaumont, but she thought that she was sensible enough to see that the longer she waited the worse it would be. Then she told her that Mr. Beaumont was very much concerned to find what mischief he had unintentionally done, and was as much ashamed as herself to remember what he had said about Colonel Russell; but that, though he was not laughing at her, he had not expected his words to be taken quite so seriously, and of course would not have talked as he did, if he had had an idea that she was Colonel Russell's niece. He was very sorry about it all, and quite understood that it was difficult for her to tell him who she was, when she fancied that he and her uncle were deadly enemies; but it would make him more uncomfortable if he thought that she still wanted to keep out of his way; it would look as if she could not forgive him the trouble he had caused. And even supposing that he did think she had been silly, what did it matter? Everybody did silly things sometimes, and she could not expect to be the only exception, and after all, people really did not think about one nearly as much as one fancied. Then, as to Mr. Beaumont's supposed wrongs—if people had no right to property which they had honestly bought, because it had once belonged to some one else, what confusion there would be, there would not be a house or a foot of land anywhere which might not be disputed. However, there was no need to go into all that now, as Mr. Beaumont himself did not feel that he had any real ground of complaint.

'The only thing,' said Cousin Hester, in conclusion, 'that I really do feel angry with you for, Dulcie, is for thinking that my dear, good father could wrong *any*body.'

'I am very sorry,' murmured Dulcie.

'Well, as you did not know him, I must forgive you, especially as Mr. Beaumont misled you. You see—but perhaps we have talked enough now, and you had better rest.

'Oh no, I am not tired, please go on, I like it.'

'Well then, you won't think I am scolding, will you? I only want to help you, so that you may never get into such a dilemma again,' and Cousin Hester took Dulcie's hands in hers. 'Dear me, what thin little hands they are still, and all because you have let your poor silly little self be so worried. No, we mustn't have any tears, *please*,' as she felt an ominous drop on the back of her hand; 'if you set the waterworks in motion I must run away and keep the rest of my sermon for another time, and then you will still have it hanging over your head. There's a good child, you are going to be cheerful about it, aren't you? I want to have you looking quite bonnie again before Aunt Mary comes, for my own sake, you know, not yours, or she may think that I have kept you in the tower and fed you on bread and water. Well then, what I was going to say was, that a little more trust in other people would have saved you most of this trouble. If you had trusted Mr. Beaumont and told him that you were the niece of the man who had "wronged" him, he would have apologised and explained; and if you had trusted Aunt Mary, *she* would have explained. I know that you did not like to shock her, as you thought you should; but if you had only told her that Mr. Beaumont's family had once lived at Plancöet that would have been enough, without saying anything about my father. And don't you think it was a little odd that you should fancy you had discovered something that Aunt Mary did not know, and that you should have been so ready to believe ill of Uncle Russell without hearing what was to be said on his side? Well, I have told Mr. Beaumont that he must bear the chief blame of that; but still, in such cases it is better to think that one has misundertood, especially when one is not fifteen! Then, after that, as you let the opportunity slip with Aunt Mary, things grew more difficult for you, but even then, if you had said that first morning that you knew Mr. Beaumont a little, it would have saved you a good deal; you would have been less afraid of meeting him, and I should have told you we met him at the Mairie. However, you see it all for yourself now, don't you? it was just one thread after another until you were in a regular cobweb and could not find a way out; but it is all gone now, isn't it?'

'Yes,' said Dulcie, giving Cousin Hester's hand a squeeze. And then after a pause, she said, hesitating a little, 'There is only one thing—it *was* odd, wasn't it, that I should have seen, whoever it was, three times in the avenue, and each time I saw Mr. Beaumont afterwards?'

'Well, it was a coincidence, but no doubt it can be easily explained. The first time you were upstairs and did not notice particularly, so I think it might well have been one of the maids in a bib-apron, perhaps an extra large one; and the second time it was only a glimpse of white, wasn't it? and the third, well, when it came to the third time, you were just so nervous and feverish that you might have fancied almost anything! And now I must run away, and here is Fando coming to sit with you.'

Dulcie came downstairs the next day. She dreaded it much, and it was not pleasant just at first, but the awkwardness soon wore off, and after all it was not as bad as she expected. The children were out, and when they came into tea she had hers with Cousin Hester in the drawing-room, and Uncle Russell came in for a cup, and, after saying a few kind words, talked of something else. Then Mr. Beaumont looked in for a promised game with the boys, and the worst was over!

Moreover, Judy very soon made her appearance, and had carried him off to the dining-room almost before Dulcie had fully realised the fact that what she had so greatly dreaded had actually come to pass—they had met!—at Plancöet! and with the eyes of the old De Beaumonts looking solemnly down upon them, and—there had not been an earthquake! After this it was tolerably plain sailing, and at least there could not be any more '*first* times;' and before many days were over Dulcie began to wonder how she could ever have suspected Uncle Russell as she had done, after living in the house with him.

'And he was *so* kind about it!' she said a few days later to Fando. 'Do you know he came and sat with me while you were out, and he explained it all to me; and then he said I must have the paint-box to show that—that—well, he *said*, to show that we had made it up; but of course I knew *I* hadn't anything to make up, and I told him so. I hope he believes how sorry I am; but I never can say what I mean, and I was too much ashamed to say much at all—I wish I could!'

'So you will, after a little,' said Fando re-assuringly; 'but Cousin Hester has told him all about it, I am sure. Everybody makes mistakes, and do you know I think Mr. Beaumont's was much worse than yours, because he is a grown-up man, and I expect that he is every bit as much ashamed as you, perhaps more.'

'Yes, he told me he was, and he was very kind too; everybody has been kind.'

In another week or two Dulcie had almost ceased to be anything of an invalid and was fast regaining her looks, while her spirits were brighter than they had ever been.

It was a warm, still September evening, and after a game of croquet the children had dispersed in various directions. Dulcie was lingering in front of the house listening for the owls. She could hear the boys shouting to one another in the meadow, and she had seen Fando go indoors, and was thinking that she must follow her example, when presently Judy re-appeared with Willie, saying mysteriously, 'Dulcie, I want you a minute; do you mind coming?'

'Coming where?'

'Oh! not far, only just inside the avenue! Come along. Willie and I are going to scatter the Korrigan, aren't we, Willie? He won't be afraid with me, and besides he has got his pistol all ready loaded, and I am sure that makes noise enough to scarify a dozen! I should think pistols were not invented in Lord Nann's time, or he would have been more nimble with that wicked old lady. It will be such fun to see her jump! Perhaps she will go right up into the trees and be caught by her hair! We'll go just behind the bit of wall! I didn't want the boys, because they would make a noise too soon. Now then—hush!'

'That's her singing,' whispered Willie in a minute or two, 'and I see a bit of white!' but with one hand in Judy's and the other grasping his pistol with the cork well stuffed in, he seemed to have forgotten his fears.

The figure came up the avenue at its usual slow pace, and singing the same doleful song; but, just before it reached them, Judy gave the signal, and, as Willie popped his pistol in the most valiant style and with a resounding report, the song was abruptly cut short by loud, shrill exclamations; and when the three rushed boldly out, they found that the weapon had taken deadly effect, for there, upon the ground, in a confused, shapeless heap lay Cousin Hester's clean white muslin, while the poor little old woman, who had been bringing it home full-spread upon a stick, was wringing her hands and lamenting, and uttering not a few maledictions against the evil *gamins* who had, as she thought, given her this terrible fright!

And thus the last mystery was cleared up, and the 'White Lady' effectually *laid!*

'And I *didn't* say "I told you so!"' said Judy, claiming some credit for her forbearance, as she recounted the exploit to Cousin Hester, 'I *hadn't* said so, but then I thought it, and that's as good.'

A few days after this Aunt Mary arrived, and perhaps the best proof that Dulcie was trying to follow Cousin Hester's advice was to be found in the fact that, of her own accord, she told her the whole history of her difficulties.

The holidays were fast drawing to a close now, and the last week was a very busy one, in preparation for the entertainment to be given to the poor children. Everything went off brilliantly, and Mademoiselle's pupils, Dulcie being excused, rejoiced her heart and did themselves credit by the way in which they took their parts in the little play which she had devised for them.

The children were charmed with their clothes and presents, and danced away in the country-dance introduced at Judy's suggestion, with an absence of awkwardness which Dulcie envied; and Judy's only regret was that she could not see how they looked, and hear what they said when they reached their homes and found the fairy-gifts of wood for the winter and other useful things, which had been left there in their absence.

Thus ended Dulcie's first visit to Plancöet; but it was not the last, and in the meantime she did not lose sight of her newly-found relations. She and Fando became firm friends and went on with their drawing and other studies together, and she had a happy home with Aunt Mary and Uncle John; but perhaps the happiest days of all were those which she spent from time to time with Cousin Hester, even though she did sometimes meet Mr. Beaumont also! But she was no longer afraid of him; and the time came at last, though it was rather long in coming, when she was even able to laugh with him over their adventures.

But by that time his imaginary 'wrongs' had been righted, without the wronging of any one else, and the old portraits had the satisfaction of seeing one of their own race once more dwelling at Plancöet; for Mr. Beaumont had become 'Cousin Henri,' and he always declared that he owed his wife and his restoration alike, to Dulcie.

MR. VALENTINE.

A SKETCH.

BY JOANNA HARRISON.

I.

I SUPPOSE it does not often occur in this world that the dream of one's life is realised. Yet this is what is going to happen to me. Surely I am indeed a happy girl, and a favourite of fortune. I have been invited to spend the winter months with my uncle, Professor Crichton, and his two daughters, at St. Rule. This is not exactly the dream of my life, but it is as near to it, perhaps, as I can expect to come. I have often thought what happiness it would be to spend a great part of each year in some beautiful old city—Oxford, perhaps, for choice—full of poetry and historical associations, and there to be able to read as many books as ever I like. I would not wish to go to Girton or Newnham; I am not clever enough, nor have I any wish to study very hard; but I should like to have books to read, and leisure to read them. Learned leisure—what a comfortable phrase!

I have no reason to complain of my home; it is situated in one of the very loveliest parts of the West Highlands of Scotland, and has every beauty which sea and shore, hill and crag, can give it. And Nature is *really* better than all the books in the world. I have kind parents and five dear little brothers, and if I had only 'common sense,' I should be perfectly contented. That is what my mother always tells me. She herself possesses this desirable quality in an eminent degree; my father also is a practical man. I do not know how it is that I have been made so differently, nor why I do not take a pleasure in looking after the household, and mending the boys' clothes. I do these things, of course, but how unwillingly! and how much better I like being out-of-doors all day long, gazing at the waves, and perhaps making bad verses about them; watching the white rows of sea-birds which congregate on the rocks in the early morning, and listening to their talk and laughter; or climbing the hills in the sunset, and straining my eyes to see, far away in the west beyond the distant islands, the shores of the island of the blest!

My cousin, Kate Crichton, who wrote me the letter of invitation, described the old university town of St. Rule quite charmingly, and said that an atmosphere of dignity and cultured calm pervades its society. This description took my fancy extremely, and I could not help expressing to my mother some of the pleasure I felt at so elevating a prospect. Excitement must have given me boldness, for my mother was not the sort of person to whom I would naturally have made that remark. 'Oh! yes,' she said, looking at me with a sort of pitying contempt, as she took from me the pile of newly-washed linen which I was absently clasping to my heart. 'Your cousins Katie and Flora are clever girls—intellectual, and that. Your aunt was that kind of woman—well, poor thing, she's dead now—and what good her high education did her *I* don't know, for she never knew good salt butter from bad for all the Latin and Greek she read, and her table-cloths were a disgrace to be seen!'

When I wrote to my mother from St. Rule a week later, I was constrained to admit that, though I had no particular fault to find with the butter, the society was certainly wanting in the calm dignity which I had been led to expect to find in it. My chief fear in going to St. Rule had been that my cousins would be so clever and learned that they would utterly despise me. I did not, however, find this to be the case. On the contrary, they were most kind and compassionate to my ignorance, and so frank and confiding that we became intimate immediately. They do talk a great deal about culture, certainly. As to my Uncle Æneas, a benevolent old man with a bushy grey beard and a bald head, he seldom speaks to any one, but walks about the room like one in a dream, upsetting things. This proceeds, I am told, from the fact that he is 'always thinking about Greek plays.' However, before he became accustomed to my presence in the house, he exerted himself to make conversation.

'Your cousin Marjory has arrived at a most opportune time, my dears,' he said one morning at breakfast, a day or two after my arrival. Here followed a classical quotation, which I am compelled, from ignorance, to omit. 'You will be able to make the acquaintance of two writers of some eminence who are staying at St. Rule just now,' he added, turning to me. 'A distinguished member of the Psychical Society, Professor Zeitgeist, and also a young poet. Ahem!'

He glanced furtively at his daughter Kate, who looked straight before her. Flora blushed.

'I should like to meet a poet—at least, I think so,' I said rather doubtfully. 'I have read some of Mr. Valentine's poems; they are beautiful, are they not, Uncle Æneas?'

'They are considered so—by young ladies,' returned the Professor, with another sly glance at his daughters. 'I am no judge of English verse. Superficial—superficial! But not a word against Adrian Valentine. He is admired by all the females, and they are the ruling body in St. Rule.'

'How tiresome papa is this morning,' said Flora, putting her arm through mine, as we three left the breakfast table. 'He generally takes no notice of anything. It must be your coming, May, that has put it into his head to make jokes.'

'You needn't lay the blame on May,' said Kate, with asperity. 'If you *will* blush and look like a goose whenever anybody's name is mentioned, of course he'll make jokes. You can't expect anything but coarseness from *him*; remember he belongs to the last generation, and isn't a fine specimen of that. You think it proper to look shocked, May, but can you deny it?'

I answered with some warmth, that whether I could deny it or not, I did not consider that Kate described her parent in suitable language, at which both girls laughed scornfully, and Kate said—

'Oh, my dear, you are so old-fashioned! Flora, how shall you entertain May this morning?'

'Why, what are you going to do?'

'I am going to walk with Mr. Valentine, at eleven,' replied Kate calmly.

'Oh, what a shame! Can't we come? Or at least,' cried Flora, reading refusal on Kate's impassive face, 'at least you'll bring him in to luncheon?'

'Certainly not, as long as *you* are housekeeper!' returned Kate, rising with majesty from her seat. 'I shall *not* bring him here again to eat raw chicken and burnt ginger-bread. If you had blushed that day, Flora, there would at least have been occasion for it.' And Kate swept from the room.

I felt sorry for poor Flora, who was in tears, and took her hand sympathetically.

'Dear child,' she said, kissing me, 'you see a little of what I have to endure. Kate's temper is—— Ah, well, no matter!' She sighed and shook her head. 'Whoever marries Kate will have a handful, that's one comfort.'

'Flora,' said I, wishing to gain some knowledge of the real state of affairs, 'Kate isn't engaged to Mr. Valentine, is she?'

'No, indeed,' said Flora.

'But he admires her; or, forgive me, Flora, perhaps it is you he admires?'

'I doubt very much whether he admires either of us,' replied Flora frankly. 'It's *supposed* to be Kate. You see Kate's masterful, and she just takes him out walking; and she talks to him, and he can't do anything else, you know. *I* hardly ever see him, Kate takes very good care I don't. He's awfully handsome,' she concluded pensively.

'Handsome, and a poet? I dare say he's very conceited,' said I. 'I wouldn't bother about him, Flora, if I were you. Let's talk of something else.'

Flora moved to the window, and began to drum upon the pane with her fingers. I took up a book. After a minute or two Flora turned round again.

'Don't read, May,' she said. 'If you *will* improve your mind, help me with my essay.'

'What essay?' I inquired.

'Put down your book then, and I'll tell you all about it. You must know,' said Flora, resuming her confidential undertone, 'that it is open to all the girls in this town, over sixteen and under twenty (including the Academy girls of course), to write an essay for a prize. The prize to be five pounds, given by Mr. Valentine.'

'And you and Kate are trying for this prize?'

'I am,' said Flora triumphantly, 'but not Kate. Kate's out of it—she's twenty-one. Besides, Kate's mathematical—she wouldn't care for the subject.'

'And what is the subject?'

'Romance. We're to define it, and give examples of it in literature, and, in short, say anything we like about it. Now, May, would you like to compete? You are perfectly eligible, you're only eighteen, and you've plenty of time to write it.'

'Oh, Flora, dear, I don't think I want to compete for a prize given by Mr. Valentine. To be sure, I shouldn't have the slightest chance of getting it. It is a very interesting subject.'

'Isn't it?' said Flora. 'So much nicer than a dry course of lectures on literature, which is what we ladies were to have had this winter. But the Professor, who intended to give them, is ill. Mr. Valentine is his nephew, and was asked to take his place, but he doesn't like lecturing, so he gave us this instead. Now, May, do try for it. I see you are wavering, and I know you can do it. I won't show you my essay until you've written yours, and then we can compare them.'

Before I had had time to make up my mind on this weighty question, Kate put her head in at the door, and announced that she was now about to start for her walk.

'Is Mr. Valentine come?' asked Flora breathlessly.

'He's coming, I can see his dog,' answered her sister, putting up her eyeglass to gaze out of the window down the street. 'He needn't have the trouble of coming in, I shall meet him at the door. You can see us start from the window, if you like.'

Flora sprang to the window without hesitation. I at first resolved to be too proud to do so, but I must confess with shame that the desire to behold a real live poet overcame my dignity, and I approached the window, taking care, however, to keep behind the curtain. As Kate opened the door, the poet took off his hat to bid her good-morning, so I had a full view of him. He looked very young, almost boyish, but his fair complexion, smooth, beardless face, and light curling hair may have made him appear younger than he really was. It struck me, as I looked at him, that he wore that haughty, bored expression which novelists ascribe to young Guardsmen and the sons of the nobility, and this irritated me, for I felt sure that air of languor was unnatural and acquired. I turned impatiently from the window and remarked to Flora that I thought Mr. Valentine was nothing but a conceited boy, and I did not know why we gave ourselves the trouble to get off our seats to look at him.

However, to please Flora, who was very eager that I should promise to write the essay, I consented to do so, thinking that it could not excite remark, and would make little difference to any one.

II.

KATE returned from her walk in so exalted a frame of mind, that she did not deign to answer many of our questions or remarks. She was altogether too uplifted in soul, and I suspect too tired in body, to accompany Flora and me on a round of visits we paid that afternoon. At nearly every house we entered, the conversation turned upon Mr. Valentine; strange to say, very little was said about his writings. I do not think many of the ladies had read them—but the colour of his hair, the length of his eyelashes, and even the fineness of his pocket-handkerchief, were dilated upon with enthusiasm by his numerous admirers. On that particular afternoon we attended no lecture, but there were so many courses of lectures on different subjects given in the town, that scarcely any day in the week was a blank in that respect. There were lectures on Art, on dress, on house decoration, ambulance lectures, cookery demonstration lessons: there were also Bible-readings; these last were chiefly frequented by ladies deficient in culture, who belonged to the last generation.

Nor must I omit to mention the Ladies' Debating Society, of which my cousin Kate was President, and of which I was enrolled a member without the useless formality of asking my leave. The debates usually took place in my uncle's dining-room, and were very numerously attended. I was surprised to see so many mothers present as well as their grown-up daughters, particularly as those matrons met with but little attention or deference from their highly-educated children. Kate—an imposing figure standing at the end of the long table with her spectacles on and a note-book before her—began the proceedings by reading out a list of the members, and putting a mark against the names of those who were absent, and who thus incurred a fine of twopence.

Other fines were exacted by Kate with unrelenting severity, and everybody had to 'pay up.' There were fines for being late, for not having a speech prepared, for leaving the meeting abruptly on a pretence of faintness, and for other offences which I have forgotten. The old ladies, I observed, were the most liable to these fines, and I was quite touched by the diligence with which they fumbled in their reticules for the twopences, and the humility with which they brought them to the President, who received the money haughtily and without thanks. The debates themselves were scarcely worth recording, and I thought the subjects trifling, considering the imposing nature of the opening ceremony; but my cousins explained that if they were made 'too deep,' the more ignorant members would cease to attend, and thus lose the benefit they would otherwise receive, besides, what would become of the twopences?

We sometimes went out to evening parties, which were almost always of an improving description. Sometimes classical music was discoursed; at another there would be recitations and readings from Shakspeare; at the one I remember best a thought-reading *séance* was held, and on that occasion I was introduced to Professor Zeitgeist. The Professor did me the honour to look at me with great apparent interest, and immediately placing himself on a chair close to me, he inquired earnestly, 'Have you had any hallucinations?'

I hoped inwardly I did not look like a lunatic, but collecting myself as soon as I could, I answered that I had not had that advantage; on which the Professor's face fell, and he said, 'Ah! quite so. Perhaps some of your relations have experienced hallucinations?' I felt rather small and humble, for I was quite sure that no member of my sensible family would dream of experiencing anything of the sort; so I could only shake my head and answer sadly, that I feared I had no relation who was rich in psychical experiences.

'Quite so,' said the Professor. He took a pencil and a piece of paper from his pocket, and appeared to be making a note of the fact. 'But,' said he, in an encouraging tone, 'you might at some future time see an apparition, you know; and if so, I should be much obliged if you would communicate with me, in order that I may report the case to the Society.'

'Miss Cameron,' said a voice at my elbow—it was that of our hostess—'I am sorry to interrupt your conversation, but you know Professor Zeitgeist has promised that we shall witness a most curious—a most interesting experiment. Professor, the pin is hidden.'

The Professor bowed, and moved into the middle of the room, while groups of ladies made room for him, and whispered together excitedly.

'What is going to happen?' I asked one of my acquaintances, who answered, 'Thought-reading—clairvoyance, you know. The Professor will go straight to the place where Mrs. Bell has hidden the pin. It is a wonderful thing—now watch him!'

As I watched the Professor, who had a large, heavy, somewhat ungainly figure, I was reminded of the elephant described in my old book of nursery tales, which possessed so much fineness of touch that he could pick up a pin from the ground with his proboscis. The Professor would seem to have been less happily gifted, for he could not find the pin at all, though he looked for it a long time, just as any ordinary mortal might have done. We were all disappointed, and poor Mrs. Bell must have been very much so, at the failure of the experiment. She fetched out the pin herself at last, and holding it up, explained to us that it was the wrong sort of pin for a *séance*. If it had been a larger pin, she said, the Professor would have found it at once; or if it had been a smaller pin, he would have found it too, by a different process, but being the size it was, it was clearly unreasonable to expect the experiment to succeed. We were comforted by this explanation, and said, 'Of course, how could the Professor find a pin of that size?' And to console us further, Mrs. Bell begged us all to go down to supper, putting on, as she did so, an air of extra cheerfulness, as if to bid us banish all thoughts of this dismal occurrence, and drown our sorrows in the wine-cup. The company went down to supper in pairs, the more important ladies first. As I knew no gentlemen, except my uncle and Professor Zeitgeist, I resigned all hope of partaking of the banquet, and sat down contentedly in a corner; but Mrs. Bell, who forgot nobody, by-and-by returned on the arm of no less a person than Mr. Valentine, whom she introduced in haste, and went off to find a partner for some other forsaken damsel. Mr. Valentine bowed, and stood for a moment as if waiting for me to speak, while I, startled and confused by the sudden introduction, had no conversation ready. I think in another moment I should have said, 'Have you had any hallucinations?' which was the only form of speech I could think of, when Mr. Valentine fortunately prevented me by asking instead, 'Have you had any supper?'

He had a particularly pleasant voice and smile, and I began to understand something of the charm which had subdued the hearts of the ladies of St. Rule. By the time we had finished refreshing ourselves with the lemonade and sugar-biscuits which awaited us in the supper-room, I had forgotten that he was a poet and required special intellectual conversation, and had begun to talk and laugh quite naturally, as if he were a common person. He had a keen sense of humour, which I think helped to make him sympathetic and easy to talk to. By-and-by the conversation fell upon travelling and scenery, and I found out that he was as much at home in my beloved West Highlands as I was myself—almost more so indeed, for he had been to places where I had never penetrated, had wandered amongst the wild hills of Skye, and had sailed as far west as St. Kilda, and he told me how he believed in giants and fairies, and in mermaids, and the great sea-serpent, which pleased me very much, for so do I. And he has visited the holy places of Iona, and Kilmory, and Eilan-Môr, and, like me, he regretted the old and beautiful worship that has passed away from the land. He did not come to the Highlands only for the sake of saying he had been there, and then go home and abuse the weather, as so many English tourists do, but he had been there at every season of the year, and knew and loved the place at all times. He knew that there are, even in Argyllshire, dry hot summer days, when the hillsides look parched for want of a shower, and the silver-grey rocks glitter in the strong sunshine, and the hardy green crowberry tufts alone withstand the drought; and he also perceived the advantages of really wet days, when the brown burns came roaring down in wet 'spate,' and waterfalls appear in unexpected places and white rings of mist cling to the hillsides. And he knew well also how clear the sea water is in that country, and how far one can see into its depths, and how one can sit on a rock and watch the sea-urchins and the starfish far down beneath the green crystal water. How different from this cold North Sea, which is never half so clear! But Mr. Valentine will not let me find fault with the North Sea, which he says is very fine, and has much better fish in it, except perhaps herrings and lobsters; which is a true though unpoetical remark. But here we were interrupted by Flora, who came to find me, and seemed very much surprised, and rather put out, at finding me with Mr. Valentine. Both she and Kate complained on the way home of the excessive 'flatness' of the entertainment, and perhaps with reason; though for my part I had enjoyed my evening, and went to bed musing happily on the pleasure of having at last found a friend.

III.

We saw a good deal of Mr. Valentine after this. He seemed to take a pleasure in conversing with us, and paid us not infrequent visits, to the great satisfaction of my cousins. They were always careful to explain to me, in case there should be any mistake, that he did not come on my account, though, indeed, I never supposed he did; he seemed to like us all three equally well, and to make no difference between us. He sometimes took *tête-à-tête* walks with Kate, because she invited him to do so; but Flora used to say as she watched them start, 'Only wait till the essays come out, then you'll see he won't think so much of Kate.'

I had not made up my mind whether I would or would not let my essay appear in public, but I had taken great pleasure in preparing it, especially since I had known Mr. Valentine. I did not like the notion of competing with other girls for a prize, and yet I thought that some time, if I had courage, I should like to show it to Mr. Valentine, for I had put so many of my own thoughts and fancies into it, and I thought he would understand.

As the time for sending in the essays drew near, Flora seemed to have become rather dissatisfied with her own performance. She said she had no time to work at it, she never could find a good pen, and she 'didn't know how to finish it up.' At last she read to me what she had written, and asked me if I thought it had any chance of gaining the prize. Alas! I could not flatter her with any such hope. There were ill-spelt words, careless, ungrammatical phrases, and, what was still worse, it had not, so far as I could see, a word of sense in it from beginning to end. It did not appear to me to have any motive or meaning. My face must have shown something of the dismay I felt, for a look of alarm came into Flora's as she watched me.

'May,' she said, 'I know you will tell me the truth about it—but do you really think it is bad? Let me hear you read yours.'

I could not refuse, though I much disliked the task.

'But, my good child!' she said, when I had done, 'I don't think this will pass either. You've brought in so many things out of books, and books that nobody reads now. Why, you have ever so much about Sir Walter Scott and his poems and novels—and Coleridge—and Kingsley—who cares to read him? and what are those old sagas that you talk about? And I declare, you've got something about the Arabian Nights.'

'Well,' I said, a little shaken in my opinion by Flora's scorn, 'I don't know—perhaps I'm wrong, but if those are not romance, I don't know what romance is.'

'I thought romance had something to do with love,' said Flora. 'You see I described the awakening of first love in mine.'

'Oh, yes, I see,' I replied vaguely, for in truth Flora's essay was so confusedly worded, that I had not known what she meant to describe.

'Then do you think, May—do you honestly think,' said poor Flora, looking piteously in my face for a ray of hope, 'that mine has no chance, and that yours is much better?'

It was a painful moment. 'Dear,' I said, putting my arm round her, 'I can't help thinking so—just now. But yours might be a pretty idea, if you worded it better. Couldn't you write it once again?'

'How can I?' said Flora, her eyes filling with tears—'how can I write all that over again differently before to-morrow morning? No; my chance is gone!' and she tore the unlucky essay into bits and flung it into the fire. And I did so want the five pounds!' she sobbed out. 'I'd have got a winter jacket made by a t—t—tailor! And now I suppose *you'll* get the prize!'

'Oh, Flora! Flora!' I cried, quite beside myself at the sight of her distress. '*Don't* cry. See! I wasn't going to send in my essay—it would never get the prize, indeed it wouldn't.'

'Yes, it would,' said Flora inconsolably.

'Well, then, if you think so, take it, Flora—it is of no use to me. Take any ideas from it that will help you, and write yours over again. Stay in your room this evening and do it, and I'll keep Kate from disturbing you.'

Flora raised her head from my shoulder, on which she had been weeping copiously, and began to dry her eyes, and after a little more encouragement her hopes revived. I brought her pens, ink, and paper, placed my essay beside her, and exhorting her to courage and perseverance, I left her to her work.

The next day brought other interests and occupations. Flora seemed in her usual spirits, and never once mentioned the essay, and I, supposing she was ashamed of her childish behaviour of the night before, was glad to avoid all allusion to it, and to keep her mind from dwelling upon it until her suspense should be ended. As the time drew near, however, both she and Kate became excited about going to see the prize-giving ceremony, which was to take place in the largest class-room of the college, to accommodate the candidates and their numerous friends. I did not feel at all inclined to attend this function, I could not exactly explain to myself why; a few weeks ago, it would have amused me so much to hear the different essays read aloud. Perhaps it was that I had become more attached to my own composition than I knew, and disliked the idea of its being mutilated, and mixed up with Flora's meaningless effusions. Also, I dreaded being a witness of her despair when the prize should be carried off by some one else. Yet I did not like to seem unwilling to go, but Flora might think I repented of having given up my own chance to her. Fortunately for me, a timely snowstorm gave me a pretext for staying at home. I had a cold, so it was considered reasonable enough that I should prefer sitting by the fire to encountering the slushy streets and whirling snowflakes. When the sisters had gone, I drew an arm-chair in front of the fire, and resolved to be thoroughly comfortable and happy. I took up a book in which I had been intensely interested (it was 'The Mill on the Floss'), and read for nearly an hour. I had almost finished it when I stopped, and yet I had not the faintest idea what I had been reading about, and next time I took up the book, I had to read it all over again before I could find the thread of my story. I rose and looked out into the street, where one or two waterproofed figures were passing, driven along by the fierce, snowy wind, but my cousins were not yet to be seen. I poked the fire, that it might be good when they came in, and sitting down on the hearthrug, wished that I did not feel so absurdly miserable, and that they would come back and end my suspense.

Another slow hour passed. 'Will they never come in?' thought I. By-and-by the maid came to light the gas, and I rose from my cramped position on the floor. Hark! at last I hear the door-bell. I heard Flora chattering and laughing—she was in good spirits then. I would have run downstairs to meet them, had I not felt sure from the tone of Flora's voice that she was talking to a stranger. I heard Kate say, 'Good-bye, then, since you won't come in.'

A man's voice answered cordially, 'Good-bye—good-bye, Miss Flora,' and the door was shut.

Flora sprang upstairs three steps at a time, and flung herself into my arms. 'Oh! May, congratulate me! I've got it!'

'You've won the prize? Oh! my dear, I *am* glad.'

'Mr. Valentine was so pleased with the essay,' went on Flora, 'and so nice to me, you can't think! He walked with us to the door—did you see him?—and held his umbrella over me the whole time, because I had lost mine, somehow, in the crowd.'

I glanced for a moment from Flora to Kate, who stood in the doorway, pale and grave..

'Flora,' said she, 'I see nothing to be so much delighted at; do try to be quiet. I am certain you never wrote that essay.'

'Envious old thing!' said Flora, turning her face to give me an arch glance of intelligence.

Kate looked hurt. 'You know quite well, Flora, that I would grudge you nothing that you came by honestly. But you two seem to have agreed together to deceive me.' And so saying, she went off to her own room. I should have liked to follow her, but was afraid of a rebuff. Besides, I really could not move, as Flora was leaning upon me with her whole weight.

'Isn't she cross!' said that demonstrative young person. 'It's a mercy she didn't say that before Mr. Valentine. Of course, May, it was your essay that won the prize. I'd never dream of pretending anything else, between ourselves. We ought to divide the five pounds.'

'But you wrote it, Flora—it was yours really. You only took some ideas from mine.'

'Wrote it? not I! I sent it in just as it was, only scratched out "Marjory Cameron" and put "Flora Crichton." That was a troublesome business, certainly—it took me some time. My goodness, child! if I had begun copying out, I shouldn't have finished before midnight.'

'Then it was not yours at all—not a word of it?'

I was utterly astounded, and quite agreed with Kate that there was nothing for Flora to be delighted about.

'You don't object, do you, May?' she asked, with a sort of alarm, observing my face of disapproval. 'You know you gave me the thing to do what I liked with, and I didn't see that I could improve it. It seemed to me quite good. I shouldn't have thought you would have wanted it changed.'

'But, Flora, there were things in it you didn't like—references to books you hadn't read, and don't want to read.'

'Well, how can I read them? I'm not like you, May, with plenty of time for heavy reading. Somebody is always dropping in to call, you know, or I drop in at their houses. Besides, I've read a good many books that you haven't read. But if you object, or are sorry you gave me the essay, why then, of course, I'll give you up the five pounds.'

It was evident that Flora's ideas of honour and honesty were so utterly at variance with mine, that there was no use in arguing with her. From her point of view, I had not, of course, the slightest right to object, nor did I, as far as my essay was concerned; I had long ceased to regret having parted with it. But during the next two days the sisters both made themselves so disagreeable, that I had ample cause to regret what I had done. Kate could not forgive my having, as she said, plotted with Flora to deceive her: she would listen to no explanation, and was excessively cold and haughty; while Flora, who was under the impression that I grudged her the five pounds, never ceased teasing me to accept half of them, though I knew quite well that she would have been very much disappointed had I taken her at her word. I tried in vain to establish a better understanding with both cousins, and at length, losing patience, I declined to attend the debate one afternoon, and went for a solitary walk by the sea. They might think me as unsociable and unpleasant as they pleased; I felt we were on the brink of a quarrel, and did not care how soon it took place. In this reckless mood, I was walking rapidly along the sands, enjoying the cold wind and the fresh smell of the sea, and watching the long rolling dark blue waves as they crashed and broke up into white spray. I was congratulating myself in not being likely to meet any acquaintances, when I heard some one behind call my name, and looking round I recognised Mr. Valentine.

'What a tremendous walker you are, Miss Cameron!' said he, with his usual air of fatigue. 'I began to despair of overtaking you.'

As he seemed determined to walk with me, I submitted, and turning our backs to the wind, we strolled homewards. We had not talked long before I had recovered my temper; it is easy, somehow, to talk to Mr. Valentine. He told me that he was leaving St. Rule the next day, and had called on my cousins to say good-bye, forgetting that they would be engaged with the debate. I had not known that he was going away so soon, and tried to express the polite regret which I supposed would be expected of me.

'Yes,' he said, digging his stick into the sand, 'I have nothing to keep me here, now that the ladies' competition is over. You didn't write an essay, Miss Cameron?' looking into my face with an apologetic half-smile.

'I—I once thought of sending one,' I stammered, 'but—but I changed my mind.'

'Ah! you don't like that kind of thing. I dare say you are right, but I had an idea that yours would have been the best, had you condescended so far. Your cousin's, Miss Flora's, was admirable, and there was a grace about it which I should had hardly have thought—I have felt humble ever since,' he added, breaking off. 'I had been despising ladies' culture, and thinking it all a sort of pretence—this will show you what stupid, conceited ideas men have—and then I received a number of capital essays, particularly from the Academy girls. But your cousin ought to take to literary work; she has an excellent style.'

This idea was so absolutely ludicrous that I very nearly laughed aloud, but, thank Heaven! I refrained. That laugh might have betrayed my poor Flora.

'Are you—are you going back to Oxford?' I said hastily, to change the subject. ('Now he'll think I am jealous of Flora,' thought I.) But Mr. Valentine was not thinking about me at all, as his next speech proved. He answered that he was going back to Oxford, but for a short time only. 'For I shall give it up, you know, when I marry,' and once again he dug his stick into the sand.

So Mr. Valentine was going to be married, and soon. Was it then to Kate? or could it be to Flora? I was ashamed to think how very much I disliked the idea of either. We had nearly reached the town, and our ways might separate here, so I held out my hand, and wished him all happiness, while bidding him good-bye. He shook hands with me very warmly, thanked me for my good wishes and my friendship, which he said had given him pleasure, and hoped we might meet again. Then he went off with a light happy step, swinging his stick, while I remained stupidly standing where he had left me.

'Of course,' I thought, 'I shall meet him again before long; why should he seem to doubt it, since he is going to become my cousin by marriage? Well, that is over for the present; now for more congratulations.'

I found Kate and Flora sitting together, deep in some discussion which they broke off when I entered. I looked from one face to the other, and not reading in either the joy which I expected to see, I did not know how to begin. For a minute there was silence between us three, then Flora took a card from the chimney-piece, which she held out to me, saying in a tragic tone, 'May, look at that.' It was Mr. Valentine's card, and there was P.P.C. written in pencil upon it.

'I met Mr. Valentine,' I hastened to say, 'and he told me that he was going away to-morrow, and also that he was——'

'Engaged to be married,' interrupted Kate. 'Oh, you needn't be afraid to say it—it's all over the town. We've been holding a debate upon it,' and Kate laughed a little.

'Kate, how can you laugh?' broke out Flora. 'I call it abominable, I call it treacherous, for an engaged man to go about a town for months exactly as if he wasn't engaged.'

'But who,' I cried, in my amazement, casting grammar to the winds, 'who is he engaged to?'

'To a cousin of his own, and has been for two years,' returned Flora, in her most indignant tone. 'And Kate absolutely takes his part!'

'I do not see,' said Kate, 'why a man should be expected to go from house to house announcing his engagement. But we have discussed that already; do not let us have the debate over again. We have made fools of ourselves quite sufficiently. You have the prize essay, Flora; be content with that.'

So Flora, being fortunately of a contented disposition, contrived to do as her sister recommended, and consoled herself with the new winter jacket; while as to Kate and me, we were certainly better friends, and I also think we were happier, from the time that Mr. Valentine left. I have found since I came to St. Rule, that perfect peace of mind is not inseparable from 'culture;' but Kate (if she was disappointed) bore her disappointment with dignity.

I shall go back to my home much the richer for my town experience, richer in knowledge, in friendship, and in human sympathy; but I think that the hills and the sea, and the wild moorland, are the best teachers after all.

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCLXXV.

1705–1711.

MALBROOK S'EN VA-T 'EN GUERRE.

In the spring of 1705 had died the Emperor Leopold. He was a good and devout man, very highly educated, but dull and narrow-minded, and with no ease of manner. He did much good in his dominions by improvements both in the army and the laws, and in his time German, instead of Latin, came to be used in the law courts. He founded two universities, gave public libraries, had Vienna lighted, and did much for the advancement of music and art, and he could not but be greatly respected, though his coldness and stiffness prevented him from being loved. His Empress, Eleonore of Neuburg, was an absolute saint in piety, charity, and humility. When she died, the inscription on her coffin was by her own desire—

Eleonore,
Pauvre Pécheresse.

The new Emperor was a very different person from either his father or brother Joseph I., he was full of energy, and able and willing to do his part to the utmost. He had served in the army at the siege of Landau, shared all the toils of the soldiers, won the hearts of all by his kindness to the wounded, the widows and orphans, and showed himself fully appreciative of courage and talent, especially of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, who loved him heartily. At twenty-five, when he succeeded to the throne, he gave every promise of a brilliant reign.

He received the Duke of Marlborough at his court in the winter of 1705–6 with great honours. The Duke hoped to have met Eugene there, but the Prince was employed in driving the French from Savoy. The campaign of the preceding year in Flanders had not been very effective, owing entirely to the obstructions of the Dutch deputies, who absolutely refused to let the army attempt the passage of the Ischl, thus losing all the *prestige* gained at Blenheim. Even the Dutch themselves were ashamed and apologised to Queen Anne, and in the next campaign his hand was left free. Marshal Villeroi was encamped in great force behind the river Dyle, whence Marlborough feared that it would be impossible to dislodge him.

However, Marlborough prepared to besiége Namur, and Villeroi received orders to risk a battle rather than allow the place to be taken. He was stung by the idea that he was supposed to be unwilling to fight, and he had under his command the King's Guards, the best troops in France. He boasted that he was about to restore the honour and fortune of France, and he would not wait, as the minister Chamillard advised him, for the arrival of Marshal Marsin with his troops.

The army commanded by Marlborough was of a mixed description, German, Dutch, and English. The Germans, among whom fought Prince George of Brunswick, were good troops, especially where Prince Eugene was; the Dutch were also good soldiers for staunch endurance, and had one excellent old General Overkirk, trained by William III., and a spirited young leader in John William Friso, first cousin to William, Prince of Orange, but not Stadtholder. The Grand Pensionary Heinsius was an excellent statesman, and it was sometimes said that the army was managed by a triumvirate, Marlborough, Eugene and Heinsius; but the Dutch civilian deputies often were great obstacles to military enterprise, and nothing but the Duke's unfailing good temper and courtesy could have held the discordant elements together. The English soldiers were mostly pressed into the Queen's service, not voluntary recruits; but they fought gallantly and were enthusiastically fond of their duke, who cared for their comfort, always provided well for them, and kept them under excellent discipline. They wore pointed caps, white belts crossed over the back and breast of their scarlet coats, and long gaiters, and carried heavy muskets. Their officers were usually gentlemen of all ranks, but promotion was always open to merit.

The French private of low birth could never rise, but several corps, especially the Guards, were composed of men of gentle blood, many of them Irish or Scotch Jacobites, and high-spirited young gentlemen swarmed in their camp.

Villeroi, in absolute confidence, marched out of his almost unassailable camp towards Tirlemont, to the great delight of Marlborough and the English, though he occupied the very position that Marlborough had designed for himself, namely Mont St. André, rising from a sort of table-land which is the highest ground in Brabant, and where lie the sources of the rivers Mehaign, Dyle, and the two Gheets, but there is not slope enough to prevent them from flowing sluggishly and forming marshes. All around are villages and small woods. Villeroi posted almost all his cavalry on the right, between the Mehaign and the village of Ramillies, in front of a mound known, from some ancient hero, as the tomb of Ottomond; his centre reached from Ramillies to Offerz, and his left from Offerz to Anderkirk, so that his army formed a crescent. General Gassion saw the defects of this arrangement, and protested, 'You are lost if you do not change your order of battle. If you lose a moment, there is not any resource;' but Villeroi was too self-opinionated to attend to him.

The numbers were equal, 60,000 on either side, when on the morning of Whit Monday, the 23rd of May, after heavy rains and in a fog, Marlborough advanced. He saw that the village of Tavières, close to the tomb of Ottomond in the centre, was the key of the French position. He therefore caused General Overkirk to begin by attacking the left wing of the French, so as to draw off their troops from the centre. The plan succeeded; the main position was attacked in full force, and Tavières was carried before Villeroi could come up. Overkirk and the French cavalry had a hot encounter, and Marlborough, coming up with reinforcements, was for a moment surrounded by the enemy, and in leaping a ditch was thrown from his horse, and in great danger of being taken. One of his aides-de-camp dismounted and gave him another horse, under such a fire of cannon, that, as the equerry was holding the stirrup, he fell with his head blown off. Marlborough was bruised, but led on the charge, which broke the French centre. The charges on each side were successful; the tomb of Ottomond was won. Villeroi tried to make a stand at Offerz with the Elector of Bavaria, but before they could rally, another attack by the English cavalry completed the rout, and sent the whole French army across the Greater Gheet in the wildest confusion, when the battle had lasted only three hours and a half; but the pursuit was kept up under Lord Orkney till two in the morning, nearly to the walls of Louvain, where the Elector and the Marshal held a consultation by torch-light, and then fled on to Brussels. All their artillery and eighty colours were taken, 13,000 killed and wounded, and an immense number of prisoners taken, while the British loss was far less than it had been at Blenheim, only amounting to 1000 killed and 2000 wounded. The battle of Ramilies was commemorated by a medal, with England and Holland shaking hands, and it also named a periwig, affected by military men as being less cumbrous than the full-bottomed wig.

The real importance of this battle of Ramilies, Marlborough's second great victory, was very great. The inhabitants of the country hated the French, and Louvaine welcomed him joyfully; the French army retreated before him, and Brussels, Mechlin, Ghent, Bruges, and Oudenarde opened their gates and proclaimed Charles III. King of Spain and Overlord of the Netherlands. Antwerp was besieged, and on a quarrel in the garrison was surrendered; Ostend was taken after nine days, Menin after twenty-three; Dendermond, though Louis XIV. said only an army of ducks could take it, yielded after twelve days, and as it was now October, the army went into winter quarters along the Dender. The Emperor Joseph wished to make the Duke Governor of Brabant, a most profitable office, which the Queen and the nation wished him to accept; but he found that the jealousy of the Dutch would be so much excited, that he thought it wiser to decline—an act of self-abnegation that ought to be remembered in his honour. Louis recalled Villeroi, but treated him kindly, only saying, 'One is no longer fortunate at our time of life, Monsieur le Maréchal.'

He sent for the Duke of Vendôme from Italy to take the command in Flanders, saying that 'it was in the hope of restoring the spirit natural to the French;' but Vendôme on arriving wrote, 'Everybody is ready to take their hats off on the mention of the Duke of Marlborough.' The young Duke of Burgundy was with the army, and as he was forced to pass through Cambrai, was allowed to meet the Archbishop at dinner at the post-house, but under strict surveillance. Once before they had met in the same manner, and no private conversation had been permitted, so that all the comfort that Fénelon could have was the assurance of the undiminished affection of his pupil, which indeed was expressed in the letters, the more freely because out of reach of the despotic grandfather.

Louis had forbidden a pitched battle to be risked, and nothing could be done. The government set up in the name of Charles mismanaged matters, and offended the citizens of Ghent and Bruges, so that early in 1708, when detachments of the French army appeared before these important cities, they surrendered, and Marlborough, fearing that Brussels would be lost, decided on giving battle. Prince Eugene was advancing to join him with his army, but, finding that a battle was inevitable before his men could come up, he hastened on, with only his staff, to have his share in it. He found Marlborough ill, but resolved not to leave the camp. These two and the Grand Pensionary Heinsius, who had now joined them instead of the Dutch deputies, were all of one mind, whereas all was discord in the French camp. Berwick, the only French commander who had anything of his uncle's genius, had just arrived. There, too, were the Duke of Burgundy and the young James Francis Stuart, who had begun to call himself the Chevalier de St. George. There are strangely conflicting accounts of the battle on the French side. The Duke de St. Simon, who was present, is so cynical and prejudiced that entire reliance cannot be placed on all his statements. However, so far as the matter can be understood, it was not wonderful that the Marshal Duke de Vendôme should have a mean opinion of the military capacity of any prince of the blood; and indeed Louis always intimated that they were only present as spectators, though nominally in chief command. Vendôme was besides a dissipated man of pleasure, and very indolent, and he greatly disliked and despised the strict religious life and grave self-command of the Duke of Burgundy, so as to brook no interference from that quarter; while, as a descendant of Henri IV., he thought himself almost equally royal, and treated the young man arrogantly. The opinion of the generals which the Duke put forward was, that they ought to cross the Scheldt, burn Oudenarde, march towards Jemappes, and close the country against the enemy; but Vendôme, partly out of prejudice against the Duke, and partly, it was thought, from dislike to forced marches and fatigue, rejected the advice, and continued in the neighbourhood of Oudenarde.

Marlborough made a more rapid advance than had been calculated upon, and on the 11th of July, 1708, his van-guard, under General Cadogan, was seen crossing the Scheldt. Vendôme's orders were not issued in time; nobody knew what was expected of him. The regiments were divided from one another by rivers and streams, and there had been no attempt to secure the bridges. The English were all safe across, but it was four o'clock in the afternoon, and Vendôme did not think an attack probable on their part after their fifteen miles march, and meant to retreat in the night. The other generals thought the moment favourable for driving the English back on the river, and time was wasted in disputing, and in sending contradictory orders. Meantime Marlborough had drawn up his men in order of battle, and Eugene had taken the command of the right wing. The attack began all along the line at once, so that, as Eugene described it, there seemed to be a curtain of fire. The Duke of Burgundy and young James Stuart ascended a church-tower to look on. The French were fighting bravely behind the hedges, but all in vain. Eugene had broken the centre; Overkirk had gained a height, whence the young Prince of Orange had rushed upon the French household cavalry in the summer twilight with his infantry. The unexpected attack broke the French up, and though they fought bravely, seven of the best regiments were almost destroyed. Vendôme tried to retrieve the day by leaping off his horse and charging at the head of the infantry; but it was too late, the men had lost heart, and darkness was coming on. Indeed, Eugene's men and those of the Prince of Orange, meeting in the space once occupied by their enemies, began to fire upon one another before the mistake was detected. At nine it was necessary to halt the men where they stood, for there was no knowing friend from foe.

The two Princes had come down from their church-tower, and a miserable council of war was held. Vendôme was in a rage, and the moment the Duke of Burgundy opened his lips turned upon him in an insulting manner and reminded him that he was only there on condition of submitting. The pupil of Fénelon still answered not a word, and at first no one else could speak, till the Count of Puysegur ventured to ask how the retreat was to be conducted. 'To Ghent,' said Vendôme, and off he went thither. St. Simon says he spent thirty hours in bed there—and thence he wrote a bitter despatch to his King, complaining of the self-will and cowardice, as he called it, of the Duke of Burgundy. The King was extremely hurt and wounded, and the Duke would not defend himself by recrimination on principle, and likewise from the extreme awe of his grandfather in which he had been reared. He abstained from any accusation of Vendôme, and suffered great distress in consequence, as was shown in his letters to Fénelon. He also spoke out plainly to his wife as to

Vendôme's indolence and mismanagement, and so did the other officers in their private correspondence. It was all opened and read before delivery by Madame de Maintenon and the King, who probably had a very fair notion of the state of things.

It had been only this final consent wrenched from Vendôme to retreat, that prevented Marlborough from netting a strange and embarrassing company of prisoners, the heir of France, the so-called Pretender, and his own nephew Berwick, as well as Vendôme himself. 15,000 French were killed, wounded, or prisoners, the English had only lost 3000, and with dawn of morning Marlborough sent troops in pursuit, while others were employed in succouring the wounded, to whom he was always far more attentive than any general of his day, except Peterborough.

He was, however, much out of spirits and very unwell, feeling like his only equal in generalship a century later, that a victory is the most painful thing in the world except a defeat, and only lamenting that daylight had failed, because to complete this great rout would have almost finished the war.

It was when going to St. Paul's to return thanks for this victory that the Duchess of Marlborough rated the Queen so violently that poor Anne entered the cathedral in tears, and expostulating till actually bidden by the Duchess to hold her tongue!

Prince Eugene's army had missed the battle of Oudenarde, but was near Brussels. Reinforcements were coming to the Duke of Berwick, but Marlborough was beforehand with them, and broke through the enemy's lines of defence between the Lys and the Scheldt. He had hitherto only reconquered the places taken by France in the Spanish Netherlands, and he wished to march straight into the kingdom and strike to the heart of France, while his fleet attacked the coast; but this was thought too perilous even by Eugene, and it was decided that some of the great border fortresses ought first to be taken.

Lille then was to be invested. It had been taken by the French in 1667, and the fortifications were considered the most complete achievement of Vauban. He was now dead, but his nephew, an admirable engineer, had in his possession a scheme for its defence, which he brought to the commandant, Marshal Boufflers, who had a garrison of 15,000 men, and was one of the best generals in France.

The great difficulty of the English was in bringing up artillery, as the whole country between Brussels and Lille was occupied by the enemy. The siege-train was fifteen miles in length; but Eugene followed to protect it, Marlborough sent troops to meet it at Oudenarde, and it arrived without the loss of a single gun or waggon. The place was regularly invested on the 22nd of August, Eugene directed the siege, Marlborough hovered about to protect him. Vendôme, Berwick, and the Duke of Burgundy lay beyond. The whole seems to have been regarded as a great game at chess between these mighty champions, and the camp of the Allies had many visitors to study the spectacle. Among these was a little truant from school of twelve years old, destined to be one of the most noted generals of after years, little Maurice, called of Saxe, the son of Augustus, Elector of Saxony and ex-king of Poland, by a beautiful and mischievous woman, Aurora von Königsmark. He suddenly appeared before his father in the Allied camp, having walked all the way.

Vendôme wished to fight a battle to relieve Lille, but Berwick doubted, thinking success impossible. The Duke of Burgundy wrote to Versailles for instructions. Louis XIV. expressed his wishes for a battle. There was a heavy cannonade on the English camp near Péronne; but it was judged to be impregnable, and by the time reiterated commands to fight arrived, it was too late, and even Vendôme owned that Lille could not be relieved, even by a victory. The letters of the Duke of Burgundy to Fénelon are most touching in their earnest longing to do right, their perplexity and humility; but his was one of those tender spirits whose very power of intellect and deep feeling render decision harder to them in difficult cases, where a stronger will and more unscrupulous nature would decide at once; and a weaker intelligence would bow at once to the leading spirit, as did his brother Philip, whose inferiority made him more manageable.

The French army drew off, intending to intercept the convoys to the besieging force. Marlborough visited the besiegers, and found things going on tardily, but stirred the commanders up to an assault on the 22nd of September. There was a furious attack and defence, 2000 men were killed, and Prince Eugene wounded in the head by a splinter. Marlborough directed operations for the time, and found to his dismay that the engineers had wasted the powder and deceived the Prince, so that there was only enough for four days' consumption. Generals Webb and Cadogan brought up a fresh supply from Ostend in the teeth of the French, who were becoming afraid to encounter the English soldiers.

The ammunition in Lille was nearly exhausted, and a troop of dragoons with bags of powder tried to force their way through the English lines, and succeeded in part, though not without the loss of sixty, who were blown up by the shot striking their bags of powder. The French opened the sluices, and laid the country under water, and Marlborough had to receive supplies of ammunition packed in skins and carried in flat-bottomed boats.

All this lasted for two months, and the old Dutch General Overkirk died in the camp: one by one, slowly and surely, after desperate fighting, the outworks had all fallen: the final assault had been arranged, when the Duke of Burgundy wrote a letter to Boufflers, conveying his grandfather's permission to surrender. Boufflers sent this to Prince Eugene, who, full of admiration for his bravery, desired him to dictate his own terms, and spare his brave garrison.

The city accordingly was given up, but Boufflers and his men shut themselves up in the citadel and were blockaded there till the 10th of December, when they surrendered. Boufflers invited the Prince to dinner. 'I will come,' said Eugene, 'on condition that you give me one of your citadel dinners.' Accordingly horseflesh, served up in all sorts of disguises, formed the first course.

This siege of Lille was regarded as a very great exploit, and was always recollected by the veterans of Eugene and Marlborough with as much pride as their pitched battles. Ghent was then attacked, though the frost was so hard that at first the trenches could not be dug, and it was said that the horses' hoofs froze to the ground. However, the place surrendered on the 2nd of January, 1709; Bruges followed, and Brabant was recovered.

The French people were so much enraged at the defeats and losses of this campaign, and the miseries entailed by the war, that Vendôme durst not show himself, and the Duke of Burgundy was advised not to enter Paris. He was very anxious to redeem his credit, and his grandfather promised him a campaign with a less overbearing commander than was Vendôme; but it proved that the King's resources were in such an exhausted state that there was no meeting the expense of a royal equipage, and the Duke submitted, as a religious man, with patience to the obloquy cast upon him, in contrast with his cousin, the Duke of Orleans, an irreligious, licentious man, who by fire and dash won the applause of all, while the thoughtful, conscientious, devout Duke saw so many sides of a question that he hesitated, and was censured for weakness, and viewed as a mere obstructive. Yet perhaps his was the true victory.

The campaign was not commenced till the summer, when Marshal Villars was sent to take the command in what remained of the Netherlands. He was a brave and alert captain, far superior to Vendôme, but a great boaster, which Sismondi excuses by saying that 'fanfaronnades' might be needful to raise the spirits of his troops.

He found them, 60,000 in number, in a miserable condition, without clothes, food, or arms, absolutely living from hand to mouth, eating up their supplies as fast as they came in. He says in his own memoirs, 'A drought or a storm made me tremble, for I was obliged to have the wheat for the morning meal ground at night, that for the afternoon in the morning, and baked at once. Too much water drowned the mills, too little slackened them. Imagine the horror of seeing an army without food! It was only saved from this to-day at night. Yesterday I could only feed the brigades that had to march by starving those who were not to move. On such occasions I go through the ranks. I make much of the soldier, and talk to him of patience, and sometimes I have the comfort of hearing, "Monsieur le Maréchal is right. One must suffer sometimes."'

Villars was encamped between Lens and the marshes of Hulluch, with a ditch in front of him. He hoped for a battle, and Marlborough and Eugene reconnoitred his position, but when he was preparing to fight, they turned aside and besieged Tournay. M. de Surville was the Governor; he had been distinguished for valour in the siege of Lille, but he too felt the general discouragement, and the attack fell on him quite unexpectedly when many of the men were absent collecting cattle, and many of the officers on leave. However, the fortifications were Vauban's, and Villars had reason to expect a long defence. This time Eugene commanded the covering army, and Marlborough directed the siege, causing the splendid five-spired cathedral to be avoided by his cannon. In like manner, Marlborough showed the most careful respect to all belonging to the Archbishop of Cambrai, though he well knew that the loyal-hearted Fénelon used everything that he possessed in the service of the King who had so ill-requited him. Guards were set by the English and Imperial Generals to protect whatever belonged to him, and once when Marlborough feared that hunger would overcome discipline, and that the stores of provisions of the Archbishop and of his people at Cateau Cambresis might be plundered, he sent notice to Fénelon, and his own English soldiers escorted the train of carts which removed it to Cambrai.

The attempts of Villars to succour Tournay were disconcerted, but the siege was a severe one, and was carried on by mine and countermine, where the attackers and defenders often met underground, and fought desperately in the darkness, or the mines of the besieged exploded, so that galleries full of men were blown up, once three hundred together. Moreover, after twenty-one days Surville capitulated, and for the second time, after a lapse of two centuries, Englishmen stood as conquerors at Tournay, the most important fortress in French Flanders.

Mons was marked by Marlborough for his next prize; but to reach this place they had to force the fortified lines of the French. With great secrecy the Prince of Hesse was sent forward, and succeeded in investing the place on the south; the main body of the army followed, and the siege was begun.

Villars, however, was determined to relieve the fortress, and Marshal Boufflers came to his camp, not with an army, but having offered to serve as a volunteer. His arrival greatly encouraged the French troops, and they were eager to give battle. Villars took up his position on some high ground between two roads near the village of Malplaquet, which gave name to the ensuing battle. The slope in front was intersected with little streams so as to be very difficult to attack, and he further strengthened himself with earthworks, and such clearances as might enable his cavalry to act.

Marlborough wished to attack him at once before he could add to his defences, but Eugene thought it wiser to wait for some troops which were coming up from Tournay. So a day was allowed to pass, but at 3 A.M. of the 11th of September, Divine Service was performed at the head of all the regiments, and then the heavy guns were brought forward, and the army began to move under such a heavy fog that they could not see before them. The French laid down their spades at the approach of their enemies, and were drawn up in full order, greeting their leader as he rode along their ranks with shouts of 'Vive le Roi! Vive le Márechal de Villars,' while the English regarded their earthworks with scorn, declàring that this was fighting against moles.

At half past seven the mist cleared off, and the firing began by an attack by Eugene on the left, Marlborough on the centre, General Withers on the flank. It was the severest of all Marlborough's battles. Over and over again the French forced back their assailants, and the Prince of Orange, making a charge of horse without orders, did indeed plant his colours on the entrenchments, but lost two thousand men and was driven back. Eugene had made some way, but was wounded, though he would not pause to have the wound dressed, saying, 'If I am to die here, it will be useless. If not, there will be plenty of time by-and-by.'

Villars was also wounded by a shot below the knee, and likewise refused to leave the field; but the pain caused a fainting fit, which lasted till he had been carried into his quarters at Quesnoy. It was well for the French that Boufflers was present to assume the command, for Marlborough saw that the decisive moment had come. Little progress had indeed been made on the wings of the enemy, but reinforcements there had drained the centre of infantry, leaving the cavalry exposed. A cannonade was directed on them, and though they three times gallantly charged the battery, they were each time repulsed with great loss. Marlborough and Eugene charged and broke them, and the Prince of Orange renewed his attack on the right, this time successfully.

Boufflers saw that the day was lost, and sounded a retreat in great grief and vexation, but he was able to lead away his troops in perfect order, without losing either colours or prisoners, and the allies were too much exhausted for pursuit; indeed, they had lost more than the French behind the earthworks, thirteen thousand to fourteen thousand, so that Villars wrote, as the Romans did of Pyrrhus, that such another victory would have been fatal to the enemy.

Indeed, Marlborough would hardly have fought the battle but that he thought it would secure the peace. He wrote to his wife, 'God Almighty be praised, it is now in our power to have what peace we please, and I may be pretty well assured of never being in another battle.'

Nor was he. This was his last, after a career of victory only paralleled by that of Wellington, who, like him, never lost a standard or a gun. Marlborough was quite ill with the exertion and the pain of witnessing suffering, and losing friends. He sent to Villars to arrange for the removal and relief of the many French wounded, and as usual showed his humanity.

The French heard a report that he was dead, and this originated that song still sung in French nurseries and sold at French fairs, gaudily illustrated on a broadside, of the worst paper. A copy was bought at Amiens in 1888.

'Malbrook s'en va-t 'en guerre,
  Miroton, miroton, mirotaine;
Malbrook s'en va-t.'en guerre,
  Ne sait quand reviendra.'

He goes in full mediæval armour, while in another picture his wife, enormously fat, looks out for him—

'Madame à sa tour monte,'

but by-and-by

'Elle voit venir son page,'—

who brings the following tidings—

'Quittez vos habits roses,
  Miroton, miroton, mirotaine;
Quittez vos habits roses,
  Et vos satins brochés;
Monsieur Malbrook est mort,
  Mort et enterré.'

The funeral is described; the nightingale singing at his tomb, and a final apotheosis of his soul in a red coat at the top of a huge urn-like monument, whence 'On vit voler son âme!'

Instead of being thus interred, Marlborough and Eugene proceeded with the siege of Mons, which surrendered after twenty-six days. As it was near the end of October, Marlborough put his army into winter quarters. He now foraged in France instead of Holland, but was scrupulous in enforcing payment for all that was taken, and in preventing violence. 'The misery of the poor people is such that one must be a brute not to pity them.'

It was still worse in the spring of 1710, when, as he marched to the siege of Douai, he describes the miserable villages, half the people dead, the other half looking as if they had just come out of their graves. Villars, though only able to cross a room on crutches, was able to ride and was actively endeavouring to save the city; but he was hampered by want of provisions, and though Douai held out for fifty-three days, it surrendered at last. Still, Villars prevented the investment of Arras, and Marlborough found it impossible to carry out his scheme for marching into the very heart of France. From loss of favour at home, and from the absence of Prince Eugene, he was likewise hindered in 1711 from carrying out his intentions, though by a brilliant manœuvre he invested and took Bouchain, in spite of Villars, but this was the last of his splendid successes, which raised the glory of the British name to a pitch such as had never crowned it since the days of Agincourt.

CONVERSATION ON BOOKS.

Spider. It gets more and more difficult to find good French books for us girls, I think. I mean girls who want something beyond stories, and reviews are so often misleading! We saw *Mon Oncle et Mon Curé* so much praised that we sent for it, and then wished we had not.

Arachne. There is no harm in it, but the tone is vulgar. It is supposed to be written by a girl, inexperienced and innocent, but the effect is that she is rather coarse-minded, and wanting in any instinct of dignity. There is an odd likeness in her to some of the objectionable heroines who tell their story in certain second-rate English novels. And I could add by way of criticism that, a tale supposed to be the autobiography of a young girl, should read as if a girl—not a man—had written it!

S. Have you seen *Tout Droit?*

A. Here it is—by the author of *La neuvaine de Colette,* and a capital story of schoolboy life it is. One cannot read without laughing at the account of the 'swell' schoolboy club of the Jolis Cœurs, which is regulated by the laws of the 'haute gomme.' Just listen to this—there is a sly humour in this author which evaporates in translation: 'Un Joli Cœur se reconnaissait aisément dès l'abord à sa démarche à l'intérieur du lycée, et qui devenait, aussitôt qu'il était dehors, pressée et mystérieuse, comme celle d'un homme que les occupations accablent, et qui, chez le bottier et le coiffeur chez qu'il court, ne sait où donner de la tête. Approché de plus près, on distinguait la façon particulière dont il boutonnait sa tunique avec deux boutons; le septième et le huitième ne s'attachaient jamais . . . . enfin, le coupe des cheveux, non pas cette raie au milieu de la tête qui s'étale brutalement sur le front des commis de magasin, mais un seul bandeau large, traînant et plaintif, comme une aile d'oiseau blessé qui tire au gîte.'

S. And here is another story about school life, *Souffre douleur.*

A. One of those charming tales by Madame Colomb, and less dear than hers usually are, for it only costs two francs, unbound. The heroine is a little French girl, sent back from India to a school where she is the butt of the other children, until one of the teachers gets interested in her. There is a very natural touch in making her resent being asked if she is English when at Calcutta, but delighted to hear English spoken when solitary among French people. Madame Colomb certainly has the gift of writing for girls and boys—her

Héritière de Vauclain is a really beautiful story, and so is a more grown-up one, *Le bonheur de Françoise.*

S. This is a new name to me—Madame Guillemette Desgranges.

A. Yes. I have not seen it before this year, but she has given us a very amusing story for young children in *La famille Le Jarriel*, in thé *Bibliothèque des petits enfants*, to which Madame de Witt has also added a volume, *Les Enfants de la Tour de Roc.* M. Calmêttes—another new name—has given us two books which have made his name as a writer for girls, *Braves filles* and *Sœur aînée*; the first has won the Monthyon prize.

S. We have got them, and I was told that M. Fernaud Calmêttes s an artist as well an author, and illustrates his books himself.

A. It seems strange that with writers who give such good work to girls' books, it should be so difficult to find any who will write for older readers in a pleasant way. Madame Fleuriot's tales are all readable, but rather sentimental; her *Petite Duchesse* is rather good.

S. Yes; but *Alberte*, the continuation, is stupid, like most continuations, and there is something difficult about her style, too; Madame Colomb writes much better. I wonder Rolandi has so few books for the schoolroom; surely many subscribers would be glad of them. But is there no grown-up story to recommend?

A. You might like 'Henri Gréville's' *Seconde Mère*, I think, though somehow it wants the charm of her *Violin Russe* and *Dosia.* The characters are more conventional, and the husband is feebly drawn, except where he is disagréeable. There are little touches, however, which are very clever, though perhaps one must know French life to appreciate them. *Frankley* has the same faults and less merit; the scene is laid in America—but it is quite readable. On the other hand, *Perdue* is very well written. It is the story of a child whose father has gone to America; the mother dies suddenly in Paris, on her way to join him, and no one knows to whom the child belongs. The kindness shown to *Perdue* by the shopkeeper who adopts her, as long as there is any novelty and excitement about the thing, and the gradual cooling into harshness when it is all a matter of course, and the girl's maintenance becomes felt as a burden, is very well described. So is the return of her father, just the same egotist as he went away. A less clever writer would have reformed him.

S. You generally have some memoirs to recommend?

A. I have been amused by the *Souvenirs* of the Baronne Frossard, very slight, but interesting. If you ever go to the Church of Notre Dame de Lorette at Paris you will see her portrait, for the artist borrowed her face for his St. Theresa, over one of the altars. She must have been rather majestic than lovely, but those who knew her say she had a wonderful charm and dignity of manner, and the grand air of old, high-bred French society. By taste she belonged to the seventeenth century. She was never tired of history and memoirs belonging to that time—as for modern ways, she abhorred them. What she called 'le shake hands,' was never tolerated by her, and she detested still more the objectionable 'sous entendus' of a certain modern school of writers, though she did not mind Molière's occasional coarseness, saying this was merely the fault of the day, and showed no pleasure in impropriety. Her recollections have very little order in them, but are very pleasant reading. Another book much to be recommended is *Le Commis de M. Bouvat*, by Jules Girardin, adventures of a travelling photographer and his assistant.

AN INSIGNIFICANT CITY.

STRICT justice in the meting out of praise or blame is not very often to be found, and, do what we will, it is often almost impossible to win proper recognition for some of the most heroic actions; so that the names of men or cities which have done them are hardly remembered.

Thus it is that for the majority of people, who have not read Thucydides, or Herodotus, or Plutarch, the name of Platæa is almost unknown, or known only as that of the scene of a very important battle. When great nations were crashing together in a conflict on whose issue depended the history of the world, or when the mightiest states of Hellas were waging internecine war, it is perhaps little to be wondered at that actions, however heroic, which had little tangible result, should have been chronicled somewhat scantily. And, perhaps, when a great state and a little one were associated in a special manner, we need not be surprised if the praises of the lesser are absorbed in panegyrics of the greater. But Platæa is worth remembering for the sake of her deeds, though her recorded career extends over a period of only ninety-three years. Perhaps she stands alone in this, that throughout that history she was guilty only once of an act which deserved blame; and that was one which finds such frequent parallels in Greek history, and was made so little of even by her worst enemies, that it can scarcely be counted a serious breach of morality as understood in those days. There are many reproaches to be heaped on all the famous states of Greece. The Sparta of Leonidas was the Sparta also of Pausanias; poets and artists, sages and statesmen, came out of Athens; but she was also the slayer of Socrates. Corinth is famous, but not for her virtue. Epaminondas and Pindar were Thebans; but that city's brief career of honour was a merely temporary aberration from her traditions. Argos, when she attracts attention at all—in historic times—attracts it unfavourably. But Platæa has a record not merely free from grave reproach, but perhaps without a parallel in courage, and generosity, and self-devotion.

A little city on the borders of Bœotia, nowise wealthy or powerful, having neither rich territory nor seaport, it is little enough we know of her. A few sentences in Herodotus, a few chapters in Thucydides, a casual notice here and there among later writers—that is all. We hear of her first—about the year 520 B.C.—as being in conflict with Thebes. The latter city was at the head of the

Bœotian league, and, in fact, as it appears, treated the smaller states of the league in a highly tyrannical manner. Platæa separated herself from the league; but, lacking power to defend herself, appealed to Sparta for protection. Sparta, whatever her merits, was not given to displaying gratuitous generosity, and declined the proffered alliance, saying that Platæa was too far off to find her an efficient guardian. The Spartans suggested, however, that Athens might be disposed to listen more favourably. 'Which they did,' says Herodotus, 'not so much out of goodwill to the Platæans, as because they wished to involve Athens in trouble, setting the Athenians and Bœotians at odds.'

The Platæans made the appeal, and Athens, with more generosity than Sparta—though not, perhaps, without a sense of the political advantage of having an ally in Bœotia—listened to the appeal, defeated the Thebans in a skirmish, and formally took Platæa under her protection.

During the next thirty years, events of great importance were occurring. The Pisistratidæ were expelled from Athens, and took refuge in Persia. Ionia revolted from the great king, and Athens sent her assistance. Hippias, the expelled tyrant, was in favour at the Persian Court. The revolt was put down with a strong hand, and then the Eastern monarch sent envoys to the cities of Greece to demand 'earth and water.' Many of the cities submitted; but the envoys met scant courtesy at Athens and Sparta. Then, at his leisure, the great king prepared an armament, under command of Datis and Artaphernes, with orders to enforce the submission of Hellas in general, and more particularly to inflict condign punishment on Eretria and Athens, for the burning of Sardis.

Eretria was invested; Phidippides was despatched from Athens to Sparta to ask for assistance. The Spartans promised help; but whether from a real superstition, or from simple ill-will—probably the former—they declined to move before the full moon. The gates of Eretria were opened by traitors, and the city was demolished. Alone and unaided, Athens prepared to resist, and ten thousand 'hoplites' marched to the plain of Marathon to meet the Persian host.

The moment had now arrived when Platæa could show her gratitude, and while the Athenian ten thousand were encamped before Marathon, 'the Platæans came to their assistance with their whole force.' Now it would be shamefully unjust to grudge the full measure of praise to the Athenians for their action. With their eyes open, they had defied the power of Persia, and they accepted the consequences freely, challenging what must at the time have seemed inevitable destruction. There was still a chance of saving themselves by prompt submission from the utter destruction which had befallen Eretria. They preferred to die free men. But, if we are to gauge the comparative merits of Athens and Platæa on this occasion, we must note the great difference of their positions.

When the Athenians decided to fight, they knew that they had already gone so far that submission might avail them nothing at all. The best they could possibly hope was that Athens might be left standing. In any case, she must become subject to a despot, a mere unimportant appanage of a heterogeneous empire; her citizens the slave of some satrap's caprices. In the Ionian cities she had before her an example of what she must look for—if lucky; and to the second State of Hellas utter annihilation might well seem better than such a fall as that. What chance there might be of salvation for her, of escape from utter degradation for the nations of the West, depended on her now making the supreme effort. And her courage did not fail. She accepted the task, and has won, as she deserved, the world's undying applause.

But with Platæa the case was different. A small state, whose voice was quite unheeded in the councils of Hellas, she had no position to lose; she had no wealth to attract a governor's greed. Under Persian rule she might fall again under Theban dominion; but the dominion of Thebes as a subject city would be a different matter from the dominion of the chief of the Bœotian league. Quite possibly she might even have found protection. Had she resolved, like the rest of Greece, to abide the result quietly, it would have mattered but little to her whether Athens or Persia came out victor. Practically her prosperity would have been little if at all affected in either case. But by coming to the front she was deliberately challenging destruction, staking her very existence for the sake of an idea. On the one side lay obscurity and safety; on the other, gratitude, and those claims of patriotism which had availed so little with her more powerful neighbours, summoned her to face seemingly inevitable annihilation. She, too, accepted her task, and has won—what?

So it was that while the Athenians waited at Marathon, sternly resolving to win or die, expecting to die, but knowing the splendid prize for which they were fighting, the Platæans marched in a body to render them what aid they might. The value of their assistance—though they numbered not more than one thousand men—it would be hard to over estimate. To Athens, waiting in solitude, not too hopefully, in the face of overwhelming odds, their help must have come like a message of encouragement from Heaven. The waverers must have been strengthened, the stouter spirits roused to a double pitch of enthusiasm, when they found that there was one among the nations which could match them and surpass them in self-devotion. Never was there a battle whose issue depended more utterly on the courage and enthusiasm of the combatants; and it may well be that the act of Platæa made the victory of Marathon possible.

How that great fight was won, how the hosts of the king of kings were driven back into the sea, smitten hip and thigh with great slaughter, all men know. Fame well won is given without stint to

Athens; but, in the pæan of victory, and the chorus of praise, it is fair to remember that among the victors were those Platæans who, unasked and unexpected, risked as much and more than Athens on a most doubtful issue.

Nor did Platæa fail when, ten years later, Xerxes sent his countless hosts to sweep the Hellenes from the face of the earth. Says Herodotus, 'the Platæans being full of courage and zeal, but lacking experience in nautical matters, helped the Athenians to man their ships.' The Peloponnesians conducted the defence on land; the Athenians by sea; and the Platæans, having no ships of their own, resolved to help their allies. They did not, however, take part in the battle of Salamis, having been landed in order to convey their families and goods to a place of comparative safety. But six hundred Platæans took part in the last great fight, when the invading army was utterly and finally broken up. Of course their numbers were too few to enable them to take a part of any prominence in the battle; but what they were able to do, they did.

Athens seems to have recognised the debt she owed them, and gave them exceptional privileges. The council of the allies also gave them some reward—a substantial share of the spoils of the conflict, and the honourable duty of tending the graves of the fallen, and their territory was declared neutral and under the general protection of the allies; and so for a time Platæa disappears from the drama of Greek history, to emerge only once again.

In passing it will be as well to call attention to another common act of injustice. We can all talk freely enough of Leonidas and his noble three hundred; but as at Marathon, so at Thermopylæ, all the honour is given to the great and well-known state—the little one is passed by in silence, and with a mere casual glance of momentary recognition. Sparta and Spartans had a reputation to keep up; to them, retreat would have been permanent degradation in the eyes of Hellas. But it was not so with the seven hundred Thespians, who, when Leonidas urged the allies to retire, elected to stand or fall in the famous pass. All honour to the three hundred; but let us not forget the seven hundred who died fighting beside them.

The years passed by; the rivalry between Athens and Sparta was becoming intense; the only question was, who would strike the first blow—who would kindle the fire that should set all Hellas ablaze. Lacedæmon was the natural friend of oligarchies: and in Platæa there was a small oligarchical party. Deeming that their time had come, their head, Nauclides, made arrangements with the Thebans. Under cover of night, a party of these latter marched to the city; their friends within opened the gates; they took up their station in the Agora, and summoned all friends to join their ranks, by the voice of a herald. The Platæans awoke to find their greatest enemies apparently masters of the town. But it was speedily discovered that there was yet time to make a struggle. The townsmen established communications by breaking through the party walls of the houses, hastily barricaded the streets, and fell upon the Thebans, the women aiding them with missiles from the housetops. And so, when the main body of Thebans arrived outside to reinforce their comrades within, they found that the whole body were either slain or prisoners. Thereupon they began to pillage the Platæan lands without the walls—a flagrant breach of a peace which was still nominally existing. They withdrew, however, on the Platæans promising to render up their prisoners.

The Platæans were then guilty of the one act in their career which we have spoken of as deserving blame. The Thebans had broken their pledge; there was little reason to trust to their not breaking it again. The sword was drawn; the Platæans resolved in effect to throw away the scabbard. They broke their promise, slew their prisoners, and appealed to Athens. Athens replied to the appeal by sending a garrison to the city, and removing all non-combatants to safe quarters.

These events occurred in the year 431 B.C., and in the summer of the same year war was declared, and Attica invaded. For a time Platæa remained unmolested. But two years later, a Peloponnesian army came against her. Platæa protested that this was a violation of the neutrality of her territory. Sparta replied that she ought to fulfil her part of the compact, and, according to the specious phrase habitually adopted, 'assist in the liberation of Greece.' The Platæans, loyal to their benefactors, excused themselves on the ground that their wives and children were in the hands of the Athenians. Sparta thereupon offered to let the garrison retire into the Peloponnese, and herself guarantee the restoration of the city and whatever necessity might compel them to leave behind, when the war should come to an end. Had it been possible to rely upon Spartan promises, the offer might have been accepted. But the Platæans answered that they could make no terms without consulting the only state which had ever shown them active good-will. The reply of Athens was equivalent to a promise of assistance if they would stand by their old alliance. And so Platæa rejected the proffered terms; now, as before, she cast in her lot with Athens for better for worse, and the siege began.

The entire garrison consisted of four hundred Platæans, eighty Athenians, and a hundred and ten women to serve them. The invaders fancied they had an easy task; but they found the dogged resolution of the inhabitants too much for them. Their attempts to raise a mound against the walls were frustrated by mines, the garrison abstracting the earth from beneath nearly as fast as it was piled on above, and farther raising their own ramparts. The besiegers applied battering-rams; but these were frustrated by rude mechanical appliances, heavy beams being slung from the walls, dropped on the rams as they swung forward, so as to break the head off, and then drawn up again. As a last resort, the besiegers attempted to fire the city. They piled an immense mass of faggots between their mound and the walls, poured pitch on them, and fired the whole. Had the expected breeze from the right quarter arisen, the conflagration must have spread to the city, and the whole matter would have been quickly over. But the breeze did not come; nay, it was afterwards said that in the place of it came a storm of rain so heavy that the blaze was quenched. However that may be, the fire did not spread, and the besiegers were compelled to make up their minds to a blockade.

The siege dragged on; no help came from Athens, which had its hands full enough. It became pretty clear that no help was coming; but the families, at least of the Platæans, were safe. It was not till the winter of the year following that a proposal to cut their way out was mooted, for the supplies of the beleaguered garrison were running short. It was a forlorn hope; and only about half of them—two hundred and twenty—made up their minds to the attempt.

The enterprise was a difficult one. There was a complete line of circumvallation, forming a continuous wall, with battlements at short intervals, and towers at every tenth battlement. On wet nights, the sentries remained at the towers. The garrison prepared ladders according to a rough estimate of the height of the wall formed by counting the bricks. Waiting for a dark night, they selected an interval between two towers; and it was not till most of them had mounted that the alarm was given by one of the Platæans knocking a tile off a battlement. The besiegers were surprised; the night was very dark; their confusion was increased by feints at various points made by those of the garrison who had remained behind. The fugitives, as soon as they had got over the wall, collected on the edge of the outer fosse, and helped their comrades by harassing those who came against them with javelins; while some few had seized the passages through the towers, and held them against all-comers. At last nearly all were assembled; they succeeded with difficulty in crossing the fosse, over which a thin coating of ice had formed; and starting *away* from Athens so as to avoid their pursuers, altered their course as soon as it seemed safe to do so. Two hundred and twelve finally reached the haven.

But it was the beginning of the end. Next summer the garrison were summoned to surrender by the Peloponnesians who, for reasons of policy, did not wish to take the place by assault. Hard pressed by famine, the Platæans accepted the terms offered—safety for all, except such as should be held to deserve punishment by a commission from Sparta. But when the commission arrived, it became at once evident that a just interpretation of the terms was not to be expected. Man by man, Platæan or Athenian, the garrison were asked 'whether they had assisted the Peloponnesians in delivering

Hellas,' and when the only possible answer was given, they were told that their lives were forfeited. In spite of the unanswerable argument of the Phatæans that it was preposterous to call it a crime to resist invaders, whose invasion was in itself a flagrant violation of the most solemn pledges, the commissioners, in order to secure the active co-operation of Thebes, condemned every one of the garrison to death. The town was seized by the Thebans, sacked and demolished, and the place of Platæa was taken by a great temple to Hera, surrounded by Theban barracks.

And so in the ninety-third year after her first appearance in history, when Athens took her under her protection, Platæa was blotted out from the face of the earth. Valour, fidelity, patriotism, generosity, rarely matched in the history of nations, met with such recognition as they do find when Might has taken the place of Right. Of the many acts which stain the good fame of Lacedæmon, there is perhaps not one which stamps her as so utterly lacking in every trait of true nobility as the murder of the Platæan garrison.

We owe no great name to Platæa. In the constellation of Greek poets, artists, statesmen, soldiers, and philosophers, whose names will never be forgotten, no son of the Platæans is numbered. But, wheresoever unswerving loyalty and true-hearted courage are held in honour, there should be raised to the unnamed heroes of the little city an abiding memorial in the hearts of men.

P.

FLOWERS.

There are, happily, not many people who, like Wordsworth's Peter Bell, 'travel here and travel there, but not the value of a hair are heart and head the better.' This personage, as we all know, wandered through the length and breadth of the country without being impressed by its beauty. For him 'in vain through water, earth, and air, the soul of happy sound was spread.' He never felt 'the witchery of the soft blue sky,' and perhaps that which has been most remembered against him—even more than his lawless life and savage character, is the fact that 'a primrose by a river's brim, a yellow primrose was to him and it was nothing more.' There is surely something wanting in the composition of those who remain untouched by Nature's sights and sounds, whether sublime or tender, and who can see nothing underlying the mere accidents of form and colour, and habit of growth, in the flowers that make many tracts of uncultivated ground so surpassingly beautiful at this season of the year, and with which those who have the ability are in the habit of surrounding themselves at all times in their homes.

Yet, dear as flowers are to most of us, it seems impossible to estimate the wonder and delight that they inspire in those who, from circumstances, seldom see any, and, more seldom still, possess any for their 'very own.' In one of the papers entitled 'Curiosities of schoolboy wit,' which have lately appeared in the pages of a contemporary, we have an example in an essay 'on flowers' by a little boy. After describing the flowers to be seen in any ordinary garden plot, he says: 'Now, in the country, the flowers grow wild in the fields, though not so close together, and not in skwares and rounds. And nobody believes it till they go in the train; but certainly boys and girls can run amongst them, and pull up as many as they like, and fill their arms and baskets, and bring them home to their fathers and mothers. And the teacher said that if we could only go the next day, there would be just as many flowers again. Some boys would not believe what the teacher said, but I believe that it is true, for I believe that God can easy do miracles, because I believe that the flowers are not stuck in by men or polecemen after it is dark, else what about taking so much pulling out? When I am a man I shall go the next day.'

Making due allowance for delight in novelty, and for the pleasure that all children take in amassing anything—sometimes only to cast the collection away as soon as made—the possession of a handful of flowers is undoubtedly valuable to the young, and also to children of a larger growth, in a degree that it is hard to estimate. We are frequently told how far-reaching may (nay, must) be the consequences of our every action for good or evil, and yet it seems hard to believe that anything so trivial as the giving of a few (possibly half-withered) blossoms should 'in no wise lose its reward,' but be the means of bringing those whose environment is squalid and degrading within the reach of happier and holier influences. The experience of those who work amongst such surroundings testifies, however, to the wonderful power that flowers possess. Rough girls, hitherto unapproachable, are frequently induced to attend classes on Sundays and in the evenings, and so gradually won to a better life, by the promise of a tiny bunch of flowers, and their being withheld as a mark of disapproval of disorderly conduct, has frequently wrought a marked change in those who seemed unamenable to any kind of control. A lady who has the charge of an evening 'Home' or club for girls of the lowest class, told us the other day, that two inseparable 'friends'—the wildest of a wild set of girls who have no settled occupation, but gain a sort of living by cleaning doorsteps etc.—behaved very badly at the 'Home' one Sunday, thoroughly enjoying the disturbance they made. But when the climax had been reached in bursts of rude laughter and utterly unruly conduct during the closing prayers, the blow fell. 'No flowers for you to-day.' Very sad and subdued they crept away, but tarried about the door, in hopes that the authorities would relent, half ashamed to own they cared so much; but they saw the others go out, the proud possessors of about six snowdrops apiece! and themselves left out. They were told that if they came next Sunday and were 'very good' they should have some flowers; one of them turned with a half-whispered apology, but the other, with a toss of her shaggy head, announced that she did not want 'any o' yer flowers,' and was not coming near the place again. Next Sunday, however, both friends appeared, punctual, and quiet, and quite prepared to be shocked when any one else was inclined to be noisy. When the flowers were produced, at the end of the evening, one of the girls looked up, smilingly, and pleaded: 'Give us a extra pretty bunch to-day; we didn't get none last Sunday.' One girl said she had taken the flowers to her father's grave, but had kept them a week first: 'Mother and I couldn't part with 'em sooner—and father, he'd take it kind all the same.' A girl ran up to a worker in the street the other evening, saying: 'Ain't ye got none of them flowers left, I did cry when I 'eard the girls say they 'ad 'em last night at the 'ome, but mother, she'd locked me in to mind the babies.'

Sometimes the girls are so much excited by the sight of the flowers to be distributed, that it is feared to produce them, lest there should be a real disturbance. At first there is sure to be a struggle to obtain the coveted treasures, and great anxiety expressed lest there should not be enough to go round. Their ignorance of the names of the commonest flowers is quite touching: 'Which *is* the snow-doops?' they asked the other day, while one girl remarked: "I knows *them*, but I never saw no crocuses afore.' Rough girls may be seen reverently kissing the flowers, and caressing them with their toil-worn hands. In some cases perhaps the flowers are not so unknown, but some peculiar, long-forgotten scent may recall to those sunk in sin and misery a time when goodness, and purity, and innocence were not meaningless names, and, while recalling 'the days that are no more,' may, in their fresh beauty, appear also as pledges of hope in future days for lives bereft of beauty and love.

We all recognise flowers as suitable offerings for the sick, and most of the principal hospitals are well supplied with them during the summer months; but, while it is impossible to overestimate the boon that these gifts are to such institutions, it is not, perhaps, generally realised how much the sight, and, still more, the possession of a handful of flowers, may influence those who are often sick at heart in the battle of life.

The Flower Mission, in connection with the 'Factory Helper's Union,' is beginning its third year, and is greatly in need of more flowers to carry on its work. Appeals come in far more abundantly than supplies. The greater part of the flowers come from humble people, Sunday scholars and poor servant girls; very few are sent from the gardens of the rich. Any quantity of flowers can be made use of.

The Flower Mission is arranged so that gifts are sent direct to the factory visitors, evening homes, etc. The 'Rochester Institute,' alone, wants 1000 bunches weekly, and the 'Welcome' in Jewin Street can make use of any amount. Regular, or occasional, supplies will be most gratefully received by the Secretary of the Mission, Miss Alice Evans, 78, West Cromwell Road, S.W., and it need not be added that if any ladies are prepared to offer themselves to attend the 'Homes,' or to visit in the factories where the flowers are distributed, their services will be most gratefully accepted, and they themselves will see the surprising amount of pleasure that flowers are capable of giving, and understand in some degree the power that these 'relics of Eden's bowers' have to refine and soften the recipients.

ALICE FARRER.

'TOKENS.'

Two kindred souls, apart yet ever near,
And each a-watching for the selfsame dawn;
Two friends in separate homes, yet closely knit
By never-rending bands, to bide for aye untorn.

Not always gaze we with a hope to see,
Nor often listen with good hope to hear;
And yet we know a Voice beyond the stars
Thrills forth into our world to drown the jargon drear.

O wondrous Voice! that never can be still'd,
Whisp'ring thro' flower, and bird, and pure child-song;
Heard louder in great loves and noble words,
Yearning in these our hearts Thou fain would'st woo from wrong.

And day by day, and night by night, they long'd,
Those two hearts long'd and ached to hear that Voice.
'Could we but hear Thee, we should wake to bliss
For aye, yet e'en a sign would make our souls rejoice.'

'A sign? What and if echoes of that Voice
'Twere granted thee to hear and yet to live!
Or dim reflections of the awful smile
To see, the lavish Giver unto thee should give!'

* * * * *

The awful thunder peals—the old Earth shakes—
O'er every mortal heart it rolls and rolls;
The fiery shafts of lightning fly abroad,
And in their flight burn up great trees like parchment scrolls.

Who has so learnt to love as not to fear?
And so has feared that he may dare to love?
Who in the strong sweet Love so firm confides,
He joys when loud it speaks that he his trust may prove.

Thro' all he catches the deep harmony,
Nor quails in fear, but joys with peace untold;
He greets, tho' scarce can bear, the awful smile,
Greets it with eager love through lowly fear made bold.

O, bounteous show'rs that follow thunder-peals
The rippling cadence after grander strains;
O, soft and calming symphonies of peace,
Heard in the sweet clear 'shining after rains.'

O thunder voice symbolic! clearing all
Those mists with which the summer air was faint;
O mystic sudden lightning! dazzling bright,
Before whose smile must die all blighting taint.

Towards the Spirit-world we strain our gaze,
We stretch our feeble hands, and long to come;
The darkness round us may be felt. O! why
Calls not that lovely Voice its loving 'Welcome home?'

In weary hope deferred we droop our eyes
Down on our robes—and O the stains! the stains!
'Raptures and longings waft no ships to port;'
Whose robes are washed alone abundant entrance gains.

Daily, with care unsparing, till no soil
Doth mar the beauty of the chrisom dress.
So friend—so kindred soul—in blood we'll bathe,
Until we lustrous shine in perfect righteousness.

Toiling, yet ever watching, on our lips
The lov'd and holy Name, and in our hearts
The watchword '*For His Sake*,' soon He will cry:
'Not this My children's rest. Arise ye and depart.'

SPES.

SKETCHES OF OLD NORSE LITERATURE.

V.

LATER HISTORICAL POETS. FROM A.D. 1030–1160.

THE death of St. Olaf effected what his life had failed to achieve—the triumph of Christianity over Odinism. Before a year had elapsed, his remorseful subjects had interred his body with the honour considered due to a saint; soon they built and consecrated a church over his tomb, brought over priests from abroad, founded monasteries, and thus indirectly introduced reading and writing into Norway. Iceland was in such matters rather in advance of the mother country. Still, for a generation or two the Skalds represented Norse literature, and what is called the writing age did not begin till towards the end of the 11th century.

Hardly four years after the death of St. Olaf, the Norsemen shook off the Danish yoke, and raised his son Magnus, called the Good, to the throne. The boy was only eleven years old, but considered already a marvel of intelligence and manliness. We have mentioned how, when early in his reign he seemed inclined to avenge his father's death, and tyrannise over the free yeomen, Sighvat the Skald in the 'Plain-speaking poem' recalled him to the wiser and gentler modes of government he ever after pursued. Though he was constantly at war, and behind none of his ancestors as a brilliant fighter and leader, he was gentle, generous, and placable at home, adored by his subjects for his justice, and also for his grace and winning address, and a very paladin abroad, renowned over all the seas. Sir George Dasent calls Magnus 'the Arthur of the north; the hero, not of romance, but of real life. He too had warred against the heathen of the south; his was the blameless life of the flower of kings; in Sighvat he had his Merlin, in Svend the traitor Mordred. Harald was his Lancelot, but Guinevere was none other than the fair land of Norway, who only gave herself up with a sigh to her wooer when death had cut the tie which bound her to her first love.'*

Harald, his uncle, St. Olaf's half-brother, the splendid knight-errant, was one of those men who seem gifted in every direction, and can do whatever they heartily wish to do. He excelled as warrior, politician, and poet. He was kind and attractive to those who did not stand in his way, but unscrupulous when his ambition was crossed. His by-name Hardratha (the tyrant) was never given him by Icelanders, who were proud and fond of him, with all his faults; several were always in his train, some being good poets. Notably Arnor Jarlaskald, or the Earl's skald, who chronicled the deeds of these two kings while joint sovereigns of Norway. Arnor was from Iceland, the son of that Thorrodd formerly mentioned who warred in England, and was Skald of Earl Eric and King Knut. Though Arnor travelled much, he made his home in Orkney, and his poems chiefly refer to its earls. Orkney and Shetland were then as Norse as Iceland, and though in 1468 they were pledged to the Scottish crown as part of the dowry of the Danish Queen of James III., some say they might still be legally redeemed. Gaelic has never been spoken there, though a broken Norse long lingered, as still do many Norse words in the good English which is the present language.

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* See 'Magnus the Good and Harald Hardrada,' *North British Review*, Feb. 1863.

Among other relics of the Norsemen there has been a recent discovery in Orkney which throws much light on the use of runes, and the sort of people who employed them. Few runes are preserved elsewhere, except those cut with difficulty on hard rock, those on soft stone and wood having mostly perished. However, in 1861, close to the stones of Stennis, in Orkney, a large subterranean chamber was discovered under a hill called Maeshow, and the soft sandstone walls were covered with runes of different date and by various writers. The prehistoric building had evidently been first discovered by Norsemen, and then shut up again and forgotten for centuries. The inscriptions seem chiefly made by seafaring men, sometimes anxious to leave information to comrades who might follow them; the impression they give is that runes were more used for business purposes and as notes to assist the memory than is generally supposed. Some writers have only left brief traces of their existence, as thus: '*Thatir Viking has come to look out hither.*' '*Thor favouring, Halkis cut these.*' Another is, '*Wrecked, and near this.*' Then comes a lady whose companions were very anxious about her—

'*Ingeborg the fair in distress,*
Sailed on the dark raging waves,
We are lurking here in great pride (*or distress?*)'

'***Knut cut these runes over Alfred, a worthy son.***' '***Here, tired and troubled in repairing with difficulty the ship, Nilson, leader to southern lands,***' run others, and there are several more of the same sort. Two interesting inscriptions give more detailed information: '***Behold, the ship was abandoned, and the hull lies there among the breakers. To the north is hidden treasure and many Thalur. Simon Sihtic. Sihrith in Rosoi.***'

'*Lothborg Arsynar.—They are careful (careless?) men who were appointed our commanders*

Jerusalem leaders wrecked on the Orkney Cliffs

In a mist slothfully—

Here was hidden treasure many chains cut silver fine ornaments and much fine stores.—The hidden place lies out from this W. by N.'

A treasure has been discovered W. by N. of Maeshow, which includes many Anglo-Saxon coins, and some still more curious Cuffic coins of the 10th century, struck at Bagdad and Samarcand. The newest coin in this deposit is of A.D. 945, which infers a very early date; but some of the runes are of Arnor's time, and others as late as the beginning of the 12th century.

Arnor was considered the best poet of his day, and his verses are admirable in form and metre; you seem to hear the clash of battle and the rush of the sea in the spirited march of their assonance and rhythm, but they are almost all about fighting or sailing. He shared in many battles. In one sea-fight off Dunnet Head on the Scottish coast between two rival Earls of Orkney, with both of whom he had friendly relations, Earl Thorfinn, on whose ship he was, requested him to go ashore when the rival Earl Rognwald was about to board it, so that he might avoid the hand-to-hand fight between his friends. With the Skald were landed all the wounded men and seventy dead bodies from that one ship, near a little chapel which still stands in ruins among ancient graves where many old ornaments have been discovered.

We have a graphic account of the masterful poet arriving in the town in Norway where were Magnus and Harald, then joint kings of the land. 'They sat in one hall, considerate of each other, though each had his own opinions,' and they sent for Arnor to deliver the poem he was known to have composed on them. He was tarring his ship when the messenger found him, washed his hands, and went straight up to the hall, calling to the door-keeper, 'Room for the king's poet.' Then, going into the hall, he said, 'Hail! rulers both,' and announced that he would first recite of the young king, 'as young men are impatient.' We still have the splendid panegyric said to have been chaunted on this occasion. 'But,' says the Saga, 'when he sang "every king is far behind thee," Harald interrupted with "praise thy king as much as thou wilt, but do not speak ill of other kings."' Arnor ends thus: 'Thou wilt never let men miss thee in the van. The figure-heads that glitter on thy war-ships are to look on as it were the sun rising in a clear sky, or glowing beacons. When the king plows the main with his galleys, it seems to men as if legions of angels of God were marching along over the waves.'

The song to Harald is much more restrained, if there be not even a sarcastic ring about it. 'It runs in the King's family to burn the Uplanders' houses,' he says, and the conclusion reads tamely after the other, 'The King ever keeps his swaying ships at sea.'

King Harald was himself a good poet and critic; he owned on that occasion that 'Arnor composed admirably, but as to the poems—the one on me will soon be forgotten, but the one on King Magnus will, I believe, be sung while Norway is inhabited.'

Soon the Skalds were composing sad dirges for the well-loved Magnus, who died at twenty-three from the effects of an accident, and the mighty Harald had it all his own way till he lost his life in the fight with King Harald of England, A.D. 1066. Thiodolf was his chief Skald and his companion in his adventurous campaigns in Sicily and Asia. His verses have a fine ring about them, but like Arnor's, deal too exclusively with wars and voyages to be very attractive, unless indeed his graphic and animated poem on the launch of a dragon ship. The proud Dragon is riding off the shore, her mane gleaming, her neck ornamented with burnt gold, now she is launched off the rollers. The young king steers; 'the rowlock is sorely tried at each pull before the blade is slashed out of the strong sea, when seventy oars smite the waves with one stroke—it seems to the wondering ladies as if the Dragon had eagles' wings of iron on her sides.'

Some good love-songs and war-songs of King Harald's remain, and it is said he understood thoroughly the arts of verse-making and elocution. The following translation from his saga illustrates the Norse idea of improvised poetry.

'One summer day, as King Harald sailed by the land, they saw a man in a boat before them drawing up fish. The king was in a gay humour, and ordered that they should meet the fisherman. When his boat lay along side the long-ship, the king cried, "Canst thou compose verses?" "Not I, sir," answered the boatman. "No!" said the king, "compose, however, for me." He answered, "Then thou must make equal verses in return." "So be it," said Harald.'

The fisherman improvised—

'I pull up struggling haddock, I grapple with the ling,
And knock them dead upon the head,
A short while ago.
But I remember grasping the golden wounding sword,
And driving darts in foemen's hearts,
A long while ago.'

'Well said, fellow,' said Harald, 'thou hast been with great men or in the battle.' He replied, 'It may be, sir, that I have been with as great men as you, though you now think all men low beside yourself. Now put a verse to mine, and pay the debt.' The king sang—

'Hard the gallant herdsmen smote the sturdy Danes,
Afar they fled, from fires red,
A short while ago.
But south, amid the Saracens, a nobler warfare rang,
Our weapon clang, in cities sang
A long while ago.'

'Now do you try, Thiodolf Skald,' said the king. Thiodolf made a similar stave, of which Harald averred one line had a false quantity,* Fisherman, Skald, and King exchanged more verses. Harald's last is curious as containing an allusion to Charybdis.

'I launched my galley quickly, the lady fair might see
The well payed ship, o'er salt waves slip,
A short while ago.
But south near Sicily, the north wind blowing free,
My vessels hurled through waters swirled,
A long while ago.'

At the end the king decided the fisherman had done best, and offered him money, which he declined, saying he was a gentleman fishing for his own amusement. He proved to be a warrior who had fought under King Olaf, and now joined King Harald's guard.

More romantic is Harald's love-song to some unknown lady Gerda. He recounts his adventures and boasts of his various accomplishments; runes, book-reading, poetry, smith-work, shooting, riding, rowing, and skating; and tells of the dangers he has overcome, as when 'we baled, sixteen of us, in four berths, and the sea grew high, and the dun wave drove over the laden hull—and yet,' rings always the burden, 'Gerda in Gardar holds me in scorn.'

Others of Harald's Skalds were Thiodolf's brother Bolverkr, Valgard of Velli and Thorarin Skeggisson, all Icelanders who contributed their quota to his biography; and also Stufr the blind, of whom much is told in the Sagas. He belonged to a good family in Iceland, but was living with a yeoman in Norway when first he met the king. Harald came to the house with a great retinue, so that the farmer feared his entertainment would be too poor, but the merry king said 'he would give no trouble, but that all must be as every day.' . . . He sat down on a bench by a big blind man, and asked his name.' Stufr—Stump—was the answer. 'What a name!' said Harald, 'and whose son art thou?' 'I am Cat's son,' said Stufr. 'All in the same style,' said the king; 'and who was the Cat?' . . . The king found Stufr no fool, and had pleasure in talking to him. When the farmer came back he feared the king must have been dull. 'Not at all,' said he; 'this winter guest of thine has entertained me finely, and shall be my drink-partner to-night.' . . . Stufr was called into the king's bedroom that night, and recited verses. The king kept awake for a long time, and when one poem was ended ever bade him say another. At last, after thirty poems, he said, 'Why dost thou ever say short poems, not long one—knowest thou none such?' 'As many long as short,' said Stufr; 'but I would rather with my recitals as with all else, that thou shouldest like me the better the more thou knowest me.' After this the blind Skald became a courtman, and as the king told him often and much of his adventures, Stufr recounted them as they were told, and at last he made a fine dirge on Harald, some of which is still extant.

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* Quite true; otherwise the verses scan perfectly in the original, which would never be suggested by this rough imitation.

The reign of Harald's beneficent son Olaf the Quiet, he whose motto was, 'Farming and Peace,' did not seem to inspire the Skalds. His contemporary, King Eric the Good, of Denmark, and his son Magnus Barefoot, who conquered much of Scotland, were sung by a very good poet—Mark Skeggisson, younger brother of Thorarin. Ari says he was the wisest of all the law-speakers of Iceland, next to Skapti; and from his acquaintance with various wise old men, he had gathered much knowledge of former events. He was speaker from A.D. 1084 to 1108, dying at a good old age in 1110, and his poems are of great historical value. We feel the advance of civilisation in such lines as those about King Eric.

'He thoroughly purged the land of Vikings and cut off the hands of thieves.' There is a history of his pilgrimage to Rome, Bari, and Palestine, where, 'men bore splendid jewelled shrines, and roods out of the cities to meet him; they sung to the pealing of bells.' At Constantinople 'he received gifts from the Emperor, and gave him eight war-ships in return.'

Magnus Barefoot of Norway (1093) may be called the last of the conquering Sea-kings; the verses of Mark Skeggisson, Bjórn Cripple-hand, and Thorkel Hammer-Skald, his three chief skalds, ring with names of the highlands and islands of Scotland, enabling us to trace the Norse originals of many modern local names. Magnus fulfilled his motto that kings should live for glory rather than grey hairs, being killed when still young in the midst of his conquests.

His two sons, Eystein and Sigurd, who reigned jointly in Norway, were the last of the Yngling race of Harald Fair-hair, descended, as the Skalds were wont to boast, from Odin. Sigurd, best known as the Crusader, won renown in Southern lands, and his Skalds, Haldor and Thorarin, accompanied him to Jerusalem and Constantinople. Those far wanderings in earlier times, and later the Crusades, seem to have given a width of culture, to use the modern phrase, to the Norse literature, which we recognise also in English and Continental chronicles, but miss in early Scottish literature, narrowed as it was by English wars and internal quarrels, to mere local events, and confused by fabulous histories invented to flatter the national vanity.

No early chronicles are surely so discouraging as the Scotch, with their catalogues of shadowy kings and baseless legends of St. Andrew.

We would recommend to our readers as a delightful contrast the translation of the Orkneyinga Saga,* an Icelandic history of the Orkney Earldom for about 350 years. It is not all by the same hand, but must have been completed as we have it before A.D. 1241. The narrative is sometimes very sketchy, then again detailed and graphic, according to the knowledge or taste of the writer. It reads often as if described by eye-witnesses, truth seems always aimed at, and the whole story is interesting and probable. Large quotations are made from several Skalds—as Arnor, already mentioned. We have only space to tell of one of its chief heroes, Earl Rognwald of Orkney, called *Jorsala fara*,[*] because he went to the Holy Land. Himself an excellent Skald, and a fine specimen of the cultivated Norseman of the 12th century, he was also the patron of poets, and two Skalds, Armod and Oddi the Little, accompanied him on his wanderings as far as Jerusalem. Their wars and adventures, both in the north and the south, are excellent reading, and the different characters well marked. Nothing ever seemed to depress that Earl. When on first starting from Norway his ship was wrecked on Shetland, and, though the crew were saved, the goods were chiefly lost, 'the Earl was so merry that he spoke nearly all his sayings in rhyme,' laughing at the mischief the 'maids of crashing waters' had done him, and when clad by a farmer's wife in an old fur-cloak, improvising—

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* The Orkneyinga Saga. Translated from the Icelandic by Jon Hjaltalin and Gilbert Goudie. Edited by J. Anderson.—Edmonston and Douglas, Edinburgh.

'Here I take a shrunken fur coat;
Surely 'tis not ornamental.
All our clothes are in the ship-field,
And it is too wide to seek them.
Lately all the young sea-horses
Left we dressed in splendid garments,
As we drove the steeds of mast-heads
To the crags amid the surges.'

Many such little verses on passing events, as well as better poetry, remain of this Earl Rognwald, a man who well deserved his popularity. He built the oldest part of the Cathedral at Kirkwall, dedicated to his uncle St. Magnus, and we have in it a fine specimen of early Norman Gothic. About forty years after his death he was canonised, and is known in Scotland as St. Ronan.[†] Probably he would have been much surprised at this, for he seemed unconscious of any special excellence, and thought his father a much wiser man than himself. A saint, perhaps, after Charles Kingsley's heart, a great sea-rover, a gallant, generous, true-hearted man, who evidently combined a strong sense of humour with the high qualities needed to be a good lord in difficult times.

The last really important historical Skald is Einar Skullason, *incirca* 1100–1160, of whose works much remains, as he lived about the beginning of the writing age. 'The finish of his style is very remarkable,' says Vigfusson, who, rightly or wrongly, suspects him to be the editor, who between the time of Ari and Snoiri restored and smoothed down the old historical verses of which Ari had a purer if rougher version.

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[*] Jerusalem farer.

[†] It is curious that there were in the course of 150 years so many canonised warrior-saints in the North: St. Olaf, St. Erick, St. Knut, kings; St. Magnus and St. Rognwald, earls, and all much celebrated by Skalds. It looks as if they really did succeed in spreading the fame of their lords. St. Oswald and St. Edmund only, represent the hero-saints in the long history of the Anglo-Saxons. And how strange seems the omission of King Alfred from the roll, who both as to deeds and character was equal if not superior to any. Perhaps the violent death of all the rest, though in some cases in fair fight, contributed to their being honoured as saints.

Foreign names especially have apparently been thought harsh by this editor, and are often slightly altered into conventional synonyms, to the great loss of historical value. This sacrifice of matter to style is so modern a fault that it becomes curious when a poet of a language still spoken is charged with it who died so long ago as A.D. 1160. The shadowy remote Thomas the Rhymer, who left a translation from the French romance of Tristram as the beginning of Scotch literature, lived one hundred and fifty years later; Chaucer and his Scottish contemporary Barbour, the ancient metrical historian, two hundred and fifty years later than this over-polished poet of the 'barbarous' north. There was then, indeed, a school of amorous and too often licentious poetry in Italy and Provence, and there were rather childish romances in France at this date, but every comparison of such with the poetry of the 'Northern pirates' seems to bring out more forcibly how greatly it excelled in wholesomeness, truth to nature, and poetic fire. From this date, however, rhymed narrative verse (*rimur*), and popular ballads replaced the more important poetry, and the genius of the people found its chief expression in the prose Sagas.

We have now, though very briefly, touched on some of the chief Skalds mentioned in that list of one hundred and sixty names before alluded to. These names are sometimes so uncouth in appearance to those who have no idea how to pronounce them, that it has been suggested that it might be well to add a few words on the pronunciation of Icelandic, which when well-spoken is a fine-sounding language.

The vowels are pronounced long, and as in Italian, except u, pronounced as French u; j is another form of i. The numerous diphthongs, usually written as accented vowels, are pronounced—á as *ow* in *now*, é as *yea*, æ as I, ú as *oo* in *root*, ö nearly French u.

Consonants are pronounced nearly as in English, including *th*, still written with one letter, *thorn*; *dh* the same soft; hv pronounced as q, which is not used; and n̄n̄ as *dn*, pt as *f*. There are a few modern modifications which need not be noticed. The language is pronounced as written. Accent is slight and much as in French, and in declined words falls on the root syllables.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

BY LOUISA DUNDAS.

VI.

It has been pointed out,* that no other day in Jewish history is so minutely recorded as that of David's flight across Kidron; and further, that no other day in his life brings out so many of his personal qualities: generosity, unselfishness, good leadership, readiness in resource, even to haste—and to crown all, exalted piety. Only his matchless courage is wanting, and why? 'Was it crushed for the moment by the weight of parental grief—or of bitter remorse?'† The question is best answered by carrying the thoughts onward to the only other equally-detailed 'day' of Scripture, when David's Son, having crossed the Kidron, returned a captive in the hands of wicked men, the Confessor of, and Sacrifice for, the sins of a rebel world. Comparing the two 'days,' and seeing in the first the *Via Dolorosa* of the Old Covenant, we get an insight into David's motives; he is neither stupefied nor despairing, but truly repentant. He takes all as retribution for sin, and while uncertain whether God will indeed transfer the kingdom to his rival, he will keep silence and commit all 'action' unto Him. This is the mental attitude by which a sinner could most truly foreshadow Christ in His Passion, therefore even in his abasement David is blessedly permitted to represent, more fully than Abel, Joseph, or any other, the wordless endurance so astonishing to both Jew and Gentile, when his Prototype the King and Shepherd, called no 'legions of Angels'—'opened not His Mouth'—'hid not His Face from shame and spitting'—and with His scattered flock, left His Life in His Father's Hands. 'He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.' From the Psalms we learn David's mind. Ahithophel is evidently a man of mark, his house a well-known resort of all who want guidance; but more—he is the king's 'familiar friend.' They have conferred and worshipped together in time past—but Ahithophel is grandfather of Bathsheba. David's cup overflows when he hears that his trusted counsellor is with Absalom, but he gives himself to prayer. Having already sent back the priests, he now leaves Hushai the Archite*—greater in diplomacy than in war—bidding all three serve him within the city, by counter-action, and also by reporting the progress of events.

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* By Ewald: Dean Stanley rightly draws attention to his being the first to comment upon it.

† Lect. xxiv.

Chap. xvi. opens with Ziba's plot. He had long watched for a chance of superseding Mephibosheth, and now by his timely supplies —for the fugitives may well dread famine—he seeks to win the king's favour. Perhaps he sees the real instability of the insurgents, the military strength is on David's side, and the insurrection will be quelled. Whether his accusation of Mephibosheth had any foundation, we cannot tell; but David, in hasty bitterness of soul, gives him his desire.† Though weak, and capable perhaps of being the tool of designing men, Mephibosheth never seems to be guilty of ingratitude or treachery. (v. 5.) At Bahurim, on the border of Benjamin, where Michal was taken from Phaltiel, a fresh outrage awaits David; railing abuse addressed to himself. His path is up a rocky ridge, separated from Shimei's house by a ravine. This man is akin to Saul, being a descendant of Gera, son of Benjamin, Saul being of the house of Becher. He now vents his long pent-up spite against the successful rival of his family, and each curse receives its sting from the half-truths it contains. Uriah's blood truly is on David's hands, but the deaths of Shimei's kindred—Saul, Jonathan, Abner, Ishbosheth,‡ these were not of his contriving. The furious assailant runs along the ridge casting stones, as at the adulterer, and showers of dust, with the abusive 'Come out' § (R. V. Begone). Again the Psalms help us.‖ Many fail to understand them, from never reading them in connection with David's life, thus missing their prophetic significance, and even denying their place in Scripture. Rightly viewed, the imprecatory expressions are not David's personal ill-wishes—nay, nor those of the Son of David against His enemies; but the cry of human nature against its own enemy and God's—against Sin. They are the prayer that evil counsel may not prevail, but be crushed, destroyed, abolished in the victory of right over wrong. Before Shimei, David is silent, not so Zeruiah's son. Abishai, fierce as at Hachilah, prefiguring the 'Son of thunder,' would rush across the ravine and 'take the dog's head.' The answer thrills us, prefaced by the very words in which The Son was wont to check 'hasty action'—what is a stranger's curse to him, whose own child is the rebel?—he turns again to God.

(v. 15.) Hushai has begun his work. Absalom enters the city, and prepares to hold a council of war. Weak and vain, he yet suspects this new adherent and greets him doubtfully. With

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* Josh. xvi. 2: 'Speaker's Commentary.' Note.

† Ps. cxvi. 11 is thought to refer to this incident.

‡ The event of Chap. xxi. 8 had probably occurred before this time.

§ Equivalent to our 'Get out.' I have been told by travellers that the bitterness of Oriental 'cursing' can scarce be understood by ourselves. This throws light on many expressions in Scripture.

‖ xli., lv., lxix., cix. must be carefully studied here.

Oriental subtlety, the Archite replies to the taunting: 'is this thy kindness to thy friend?'—and the prince is deceived, though probably Ahithophel is not. The first counsel given, is that Absalom should seize on the royal harem, the ordinary act of a conqueror in the East. This would produce an irreconcilable breach with his father, and further, would gratify Ahithophel's private revenge for David's treatment of his grand-daughter. The action itself is mentioned by anticipation, as it is plain that the council lasted till later in the day when Ahithophel's subsequent advice was given; but the prince's occupation of the palace lasted through his three months' stay in the city.*

(Chap. xvii.) Ahithophel now offers to go in person with a strong force to capture the fugitive king. David must be weary, foot-sore, despondent, night is near, and he cannot yet have reached any sure refuge. There may be some lingering spark of affection in the rebel's heart—and Ahithophel does not say: 'I will kill your father'—yet this is in his mind. All the people shall return, one only shall be disposed of, 'the man whom thou seekest.' This counsel followed out, the sequel to this day of agony must have been David's death, by this murderous hand. Absalom yields, then, like all irresolute people, he will have a second opinion. Thus God answers prayer, Ahithophel's counsel is 'turned into foolishness.' Now Hushai craftily allows the excellence of the first piece of advice, thus disarming suspicion of his motives. Next, he draws a forcible picture of the king and his warriors. They are inured to hardships and privations—they will not lodge where they can be easily surprised—their blood is up, there will be a conflict—many will be slain, there will be panic-flight of the insurgents before 'the Gibborim.' Let Absalom gather a large host—all Israel—and lead it himself (Heb. let thy face go to the battle): this is covert flattery of the prince, vain of his splendid beauty and popularity; all will gather to him, this host will cover the little royalist band like dew upon the ground; or if they get behind walls, all Israel will unite to demolish that city. And thus he works upon Absalom, anxious to play the king at his ease in Jerusalem, readier to brag than to hold fast, with his unskilfulness and boasting temper. He secures, too, the approbation of the Israelite host, some with private jealousies of their own against the tribe of Judah—all eager, especially Benjamin, to share in these exploits rather than to witness a bloodless revolution, where Ahithophel and a small number will gather all the honours alone. Before the sun sinks, Hushai has slipped out to send his emissaries—not a minute is to be lost; the fickle prince may change his mind. The fugitives must put Jordan between themselves and the traitors. It is a time of breathless dread, Hushai knows the priests' sons are ready to speed on a warning errand—they are lurking at the spring of En-Rogel,* but he must not be seen going there; the priest's maid-servant, equipped for drawing water, will carry the message. Even so, a young spy observes the flight, and tells Absalom, whose pursuers follow to Bahurim. It is a Benjamite city, Shimei's home; but we are glad to find his hate exceptional, even there. A friendly house shelters the runners, and a nameless hostess, a second Rahab, conceals them in her well, spreading the grain she is drying upon a sheet over its mouth. She also sends the pursuers in an opposite direction to that really taken. Jonathan and Ahimaaz are still in time to do Hushai's errand. By morning light, David and his company are gone over Jordan,† and are seeking refuge in the land of Gilead, in the ancient and strongly fortified city of Mahanaim. (v. 23.) Another foreshadowing of greater events to come. The traitor puts an end to his own life, in the same manner as Judas, centuries later. Ahithophel's conduct has its lesson. His act is a compound of mortification, disappointed vengeance, desire to vex Absalom, and cowardly fear of David's return; the rebellion must fail in such weak hands. We learn from him not to avenge ourselves, but rather give place to the 'Wrath' which can avenge without sin. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

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* Exactly fulfilling Nathan's prediction.

(v. 24.) After the careful detail of one day, there comes an interval, probably about three months. Absalom is formally recognised and anointed, and reigns at Jerusalem. And now, assembling a host, strong in numbers, but, compared with his father's veterans, probably a confused rabble in discipline and skill, he prepares to cross Jordan. (v. 25.) He takes as his general his own kinsman Amasa, son of Abigail, sister to Zeruiah.‡ Amasa's father Ithra (or Jether) is not an Israelite, but an Ishmaelite (R. V. margin), and the wild fierce strain seems continued in the son. He must at this date have been older than Absalom, more on a level with David and Abishai. David is now settled at Mahanaim, and we hear of the friends gathered around him—as we have heard of the Shimeis and Ahithophels who vent personal spite in political treason. Shobi may possibly be a son of David's former ally, Nahash, set as tributary prince over Rabbah after its capture. Machir, son of Eliam, instead of following his grandfather, now succours the kind patron of his former ward, Mephibosheth. But the noble Gileadite chief, Barzillai, is to become a very name for loyalty.§ His descendants flourished long afterwards at Bethlehem, and, by the female line, were allied with the priesthood (Ezra ii. 61) returning from the Captivity with Zerubbabel. Here then, with Mahanaim well guarded and amply provisioned (as Dean Stanley remarks, the graphic description makes us think the narrator shared in this bounteous supply), the heart-stricken father finds temporary rest. (Chap. xviii. 1.) He now reviews his forces to place them in order of battle. His favourite three-fold division is made, under Joab, Abishai, and Ittai; the moment for action has come. News reaches him that Absalom is over Jordan, ready to attack him in his place of refuge. As he yields to the eager solicitations not to go himself into battle, and risk the life so precious to the nation, one cannot but think the father's heart shrinks from a personal encounter with the ungrateful son. (v. 5.) He takes good care that the whole army shall hear his injunctions to the three generals: 'Deal gently for my sake'—but gentle dealing in peace or war is unknown to two at least out of the three. There is a little difficulty in fixing the locality of the battle which follows—'In the wood of Ephraim.' Either the great forest which once clothed both sides of Jordan in this district, was so named from former exploits or disasters of this tribe beyond its own boundaries—or, 'Ephraim' is here a copyist's error for Ephron, or Ephrain; either Beth-shan or a fortress near it, mentioned in 2 Chron. xiii. 19. Whichever view we take, the combat is eastward of Jordan, in the land of Gilead, where relics of a vast forest still survive,* and on ground rough with precipices, pit-holes, morasses, and thorny brakes. No wonder, then, Absalom's large following, untrained to war, cannot compete with men accustomed to privations and desert-wanderings, or that (v. 8) 'the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.' (v. 9.) Probably in flight Absalom meets (R. V. chanced to meet) David's servants. He is riding the royal mule—another act of usurpation—and the terrified animal rushes under an oak (or terebinth) and escapes, leaving its unhappy rider caught up in the branches, either by his neck or his luxuriant hair.† Joab, as we see, is ready to reward richly any hand that will save him from the odium of this task; but the reply convinces him he cannot hope to do the work by bribery, his character is too well known. Absalom's slayer will be denounced to David by Joab himself. So he impatiently dismisses the soldier and sets out with his immediate retainers for the spot, where they soon end the miserable life of this favourite and misguided son; like his elder brother, the untimely victim of his own weak vanity, and unstable yielding to evil counsel. Having performed the hasty burial under a great heap of stones (in the great pit, R. V.), Joab sounds the recall, to bring back his men from the pursuit; he knows the insurrection is ended. When we remember his former efforts in Absalom's behalf, his own fidelity to David's government, and his keen conviction of the national calamities likely to ensue if the prince returned to his father's favour, we can see some palliation for Joab's conduct. (v. 18.) The 'king's dale' is thought to be between Hebron and the Dead Sea, and there probably the childless prince had set up his trophy or pillar.*

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* Near the walls, now called Fountain of the Virgin.

† Ps. iv. is believed to refer to the events of this night, and the journey to Mahanaim.

‡ Commentators differ as to the parentage of these sisters. If they are Jesse's daughters, Nahash must be his wife; but they may be daughters of Jesse's wife by a former husband, Nahash, which seems the best inference from 1 Chron. ii. 16.

§ Dean Stanley thinks he is the father of Adriel Merab's husband; we shall notice this later.

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* 'Sinai and Palestine,' pp. 322, 323. † Josephus thinks the latter.

(v. 19.) Ahimaaz now desires to carry the tidings of victory to Mahanaim, and again there is a touch of feeling in Joab. He wishes to forbear exhibitions of triumph on this day, 'the king's son is dead' —let the news wait. Replying thus to Ahimaaz, he despatches a 'Cushite,' an Egyptian slave, desiring, with the rough kindness that tempers his ferocity, to save Ahimaaz, the son of David's friend, from the first outburst of the king's indignant grief. But when the latter presses his request, Joab yields, hoping the Cushite will be well in advance. But he has taken the steep hill-path, and the swift-footed Ahimaaz speeds over the level plain. The details help—with the map—to fix the probable locality of Absalom's death and burial, Mahanaim evidently lies to the north-east, and we may note, that neither runner crosses the Jordan. In the pertinacity of Ahimaaz, we have a specimen of the temper that sought to please David by bringing him tidings of Gilboa and of Ish-bosheth's death. It is significant, as showing us the real elevation of David's character. In spite of grave faults he has that utter freedom from pettiness, that absence of a revengeful temper, which makes him incapable of rejoicing over a rival's fall, and places him far in advance of the spirit of his own rude age. (v. 24 to end.) Like Eli, the king has sat 'in the gate' all through that weary day, while the watchman looks from the ramparts. And as one and then another runner is descried, and Ahimaaz draws near, the sinking heart revives—the son of Zadok will bring good tidings. Doubtless he has meant to give joyful assurances of victory, and has been unwilling that the first news should be left to a slave. He judges his king by common rules, and cannot fathom his depths of generous feeling. His 'all is well' reassures, then he falls in homage before his master, and hears the question which makes him wish he had deferred to Joab—he gives an evasive reply and is bidden to stand aside. Then comes the wild Cushite, who imagines 'vengeance' to be the one desire of a monarch's soul. He has no scruples, and, with a slight periphrasis of Eastern courtesy, tells the bitter truth. Joab is summoned, not to witness rejoicings, or hear praises of his own exploits, but to find the father alone in the gate-house tower, pouring out the bitterest grief of his long and chequered life†—eight times over 'he weepeth and mourneth for Absalom.' All is forgotten save the beauty, the early promise, his own love—that fatherly love which never more faithfully mirrors the Divine, than when it is shed forth upon the thankless and rebellious child. So wept David's Son over a human grave, over a rebel city. So therefore is David, in his anguish, a higher type than ever of Israel's true King—'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.'

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* Another tradition places the monument near Jerusalem; Josephus supports this.

† Stanley, Lect. xxiv., alludes to the Rabbinical and Mahometan tradition that at each cry one of the seven gates of hell opened, till at the eighth Absalom's soul escaped into Paradise.

(Chap. xix.) The victory is turned to mourning, perhaps it is better thus. David's own followers steal back with reverence for his sorrow. But Joab can bear it no longer, and rouses his master by his reproaches of ingratitude and contempt of his servants' faithful adherence. He bids him come forth and welcome them, and thus urged, David sits in the gate to receive the homage of his people. (v. 9.) The force, hastily gathered on Hushai's advice, has literally melted away. The shallowness of the insurrection is further shown by the tribes' revulsion towards David, their former hero; while the allusion to Absalom's 'anointing' marks some duration of his stay in Jerusalem. And now there is a reaction. David must not remain in Gilead, they are jealous of the eastern chiefs. (v. 11.) Rumours reach the king, and he sends a message to his faithful friends the priests bidding them summon the elders of the royal tribe. He does not wish to owe his recall solely or chiefly to those who revolted so lightly. To Amasa, his kinsman, he gives an office which marks an irreparable breach between Joab and himself; the strain on his forbearance can endure no more. He knows probably that Amasa had served his son, and now seeks to bind him to his own service and thus rid himself of Joab. (v. 15.) At Gilgal, to the south, the ancient place of king-making, the king and his court recross Jordan, the 'ferry-boat' being probably a bridge of boats for the passage of the household. But there is a large concourse here—the men of Judah, a thousand Benjamites, and among them Shimei of Bahurim. He falls grovelling in the dust, owning his guilt; and when we contrast his present demeanour to the successful ruler with his words and acts, to the silent, suffering fugitive, we sympathise strongly with Abishai's sentiments as to his deserts. We should note Shimei's expression, 'the house of Joseph.' It occurs for the first time as denoting Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, always allied. Later on in psalm and prophecy these tribes are named apart from Israel and Judah; political rivalries dividing them to their ruin. Already we begin to mark these divided interests, which blaze forth on Solomon's death. We should note that David does not speak of 'pardon,' he merely spares the life which is forfeited by law, adding a rebuke to Abishai, which again makes us regret that this brave and faithful servant is so inseparably linked with Joab in his mind. Ziba now appears in the rank of a landowner, with his large retinue. But Mephibosheth also comes, gaunt and haggard, and up to this day unshaven and unwashed, he is come down to meet the king. It is uncertain whether the gentle reproach is delayed till they reach Jerusalem, or whether, more probably, the cripple first meets his benefactor there, being unable to reach Gilgal. His statement seems credible, Ziba had deceived both parties. The prince had bidden him saddle his ass, that, unable to walk, he might share David's flight. Ziba had disobeyed, or else had taken this with the other asses to convey provisions as his own gift to the hungry retinue, taking occasion to slander his master, and wring from David's hasty anger a grant of the property to himself. Now David feels his harshness, but may perhaps fear exposing Mephibosheth to Ziba's wrath, by revoking his decision.* He hastily dismisses the topic, silencing a petition which seems ready to break forth, by telling the prince that he and Ziba shall share all between them. (v. 31.) The parting of David and the aged Chief of Rogelim is very touching. The expense of provision for the king's family has been borne with princely liberality by Barzillai; now David would have him come and live in the sunshine of a court, but the old man's simple pastoral habits of life are not to be changed. His words remind us of Eccles. xii.: 'the grinders cease because they are few, and the daughters of music are brought low,' he will die in his own city, by his father's grave. For Chimham, his son, he will accept the royal offer, and David seizes on this chance of rewarding the old man's devotion. They part at Gilgal, but Chimham crosses Jordan with the men of Judah and Israel. (v. 41.) We have the first mutterings of the storm which is fated to overwhelm the recently-settled unification of the kingdom—a type of the rents in the Israel of God. Angry that the stigma of revolt still cleaves to their tribes, angry that their zeal in the Restoration receives no acknowledgment, angry that the King seems to favour his own tribe, though there Absalom's rebellion rose first,† the Western Israelites, Ephraim, Benjamin, Manasseh, with Zebulun and Issachar, Dan, Asher and Naphtali, now send an embassy which only produces bitter recrimination, 'the words of the men of Judah are fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.'

(Chap. xx.) We must distinguish the motives of the gathering strife. Absalom's attempt on the throne, originally supported by a party in Judah, was strengthened by union with Benjamin, where a faction survived in favour of Saul's line, as we see by Shimei's conduct, and the suspicions of Mephibosheth. Still further, the rampant jealousy of Ephraim against Judah spread like a contagion through the north, and helped in the rapid gathering of the usurper's rabble force, only to be dispersed on his death. His party, both in Israel and Judah, was extinct; not so the Benjamite hopes,‡ nor the jealousy of Ephraim; § this last finally split the kingdom. Sheba, son of Bichri, i.e. of the house Becher, now heads a fresh revolt. He sneers at the loyal outburst, 'ten parts in the son of Jesse, no part in him at all,' * let those enthusiasts depart to their tents till the fickle people go after this new adventurer. David has been setting his house to rights (imprisoning for life the unhappy victims of Ahithophel's evil counsel). But he must face this new danger; the revolution, which literally occurs in his grandson's reign, seems imminent now. If Sheba gets possession of the walled towns to the north, strengthened after the Assyrian invasion, nothing can save the unity of the State except recourse to actual war. Amasa is ordered to bring up the men of Judah, and be ready to lead them forth in three days. We are told little about this wild Ishmaelite,† but he seems disposed to linger and delay over an order which requires promptitude. He owes the king's favour to his horror of Joab, and whether hesitating from disloyalty, or from actual dread of his unscrupulous and violent cousin, we cannot tell. On his failure, David turns, not to Joab but to Abishai, ordering him to proceed against Sheba, and Joab's band with the Cherethites and Pelethites go with him as far as the rock of Gibeon. Amasa meets them here, thinking probably he has disarmed suspicions of rivalship in the command, and willing to go in their train. But again Joab removes a rival by treacherous and brutal murder, this time of a kinsman, and one who has given him no provocation. The brothers go forward, but Joab's ghastly appearance, covered with his cousin's blood, seems to have left a life-long impression of horror on all who saw it.‡ One of Joab's men sees that the forces may be scattered. They stand aghast at the spectacle, and may either disperse, dismayed at the death of their new captain, or wake to fierce wrath against the murderer. He therefore cries out to identify loyalty to David with instant following of Joab, and further bears the victim from the highway 'into the field,' casting a covering over the corpse. Joab's raid takes him to the extreme north. Abel of Beth-maachah, where Sheba entrenches himself, is often mentioned as one of the fortified towns of Naphtali, and was near Lake Merom. As its name suggests, it may have been a possession of the Geshurites, and therefore friendly to Absalom's cause in time past. It is commonly identified with the modern Abil-el-Kamh (Abel-maim, 2 Chron. xvi. 4). Here the rebel is run to earth. The siege begins, but a 'wise woman,' one of the same class as the widow of Tekoah, confers with Joab from the wall, reminding him of the proverbial fame of Abel, like Teman, for the sagacity of its people. She asks for forbearance in the name of her fellow-citizens who are faithful and peaceable. Joab's character in its best and worst aspects is presented to us in this chapter. Relentless and unscrupulous in his conduct to any crossing his plans or impeding his path, he is totally

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* I am indebted to the Editor for this suggestion.

† The positions should be studied with a map.

‡ The revolt of Zimri was probably a movement of the house of Saul.

§ Isaiah xi. 13.

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* *Cf.* St. Luke xix. 14.

† Traditionally said to have visited Endor with Abner and Saul.

‡ *Vide* 1 Kings ii. 5.

without David's impulsiveness. He designs carefully, and executes firmly, but he will not needlessly take the most insignificant life. Let the 'wise woman' give up Sheba, and Abel shall be safe. She evidently carries weight with her townsfolk, the rebel's head is at once thrown over the wall; and Joab returns with fresh honours to the undisturbed possession of his former office. (v. 23.) We see some changes in the fresh list of the rearranged court. Ira the Jairite is David's 'cohen,' or minister, filling the place once occupied by the king's sons. The bitter experience of power unworthily used by Amnon and Absalom may have caused the change; Bathsheba's influence, too, may have prevailed to keep Adonijah and others from sharing in the Government.

The two following chapters seem to belong to an earlier period of David's reign. Internal evidence goes to show that the famine here recorded must have occurred between Chapters vi. and vii.; the date is uncertain.* The Gibeonites were a tribe of Amorite or Hivite descent, whose league under false pretences with Israel is recorded in Joshua ix. We should note the expressions (v. 2) which show that this Book existed and was appealed to as a national record in David's reign, whereas modern scepticism has tried to prove it a late invention, with the Books of Samuel. The internal witness of Scripture to Scripture should be carefully observed. Saul's attack upon Gibeon, like the destruction of the sorcerers, must have taken place in the long silent interval of his early reign; we have no details of this cruel and perhaps fanatical breach of faith. The citizens refuse money-compensation—a common device, even in later times †—and with rude justice desire only retribution upon the right head. They ask that seven survivors of Saul's house shall be hung on stakes ‡ at Gibeah, his dwelling-place, and David accedes—but who is left of the fallen dynasty? The mention of Mephibosheth helps us to fix this date after Chapter vii., the famine having lasted three years. Rizpah's sons are taken, and, with possibly a tinge of personal feeling in the selection, the five sons of Merab,§ once David's promised wife. If their father Adriel be indeed the son of Barzillai, of Meholah beyond Jordan, this points to an earlier date than that of the flight to Mahanaim. David would not, after his league with Barzillai, have given up Adriel's sons. The old chief's noble conduct, like the succour of Eliam and of Machir, was a requital of good for evil, and possibly of acquiescence in the justice of the sentence upon Saul's house. The seven victims of a father's sin are therefore hanged, in a manner which was amplified later in the horrors of Roman crucifixion. Barley harvest began first, about the same time as our Easter, the middle of April. Rain seldom fell till the end of wheat harvest, early in October, and here there had been the long drought, causing and intensifying the famine. (v. 10.) There is an awful pathos, and a far reaching symbolism in the narrative which follows. Rizpah as a name occurs nowhere else in Scripture. 'Aiah' is a Horite, closely allied with Edom (Gen. xxxvi. 24), so Saul's inferior wife is a wild daughter of the desert tribes, outside the covenant of Israel.* Modern art has striven to depict the mother in her ghastly watch, her utter self-abandonment, her sackcloth cerements, her torch to scare the jackal and the vulture from her royal dead. But Scripture only can bring home to us the depth of meaning in this—the *Mater Dolorosa* of the Gentile heathen world. She is a type of human anguish, unredeemed, in the presence of death, till Christ opened the door of hope to us all. When Infinite Love stooped to death, in a form typified by that of Rizpah's children, a death 'for sin but not His own,' hope could be written even on the cross and on the grave. The one became the Throne of Pardon, the other the Gate of Everlasting Life, such as Rizpah could not know, nor Hagar, nor Rachel, nor Mary of Bethany, nor even the Mother at the True Cross, until He burst the fetters which held us prison-bound, on His great Easter Day. And now the gracious rain falls at last, a token that expiation is accepted, the weary land is free of its curse, and Rizpah's watch is over. She has her reward; 'it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah had done.' His generous heart is touched—true type of the King of kings—he comforts the widowed and childless mother. He goes himself, carefully transfers the bones of the royal house from the grave at Jabesh-Gilead, giving them honourable burial with their fathers, and in the same sepulchre the recently slain children of Merab and of Rizpah are permitted to lie, so the family of Saul are gathered to their rest. If she could have looked forward, Rizpah would have seen the removal of a curse by an expiation to be wrought by the Son of him who now looked upon her affliction. We too have yet to look forward in sure and certain hope to the gathering in of all nations, when the Lord God shall wipe off all tears from all faces.

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* *Vide* Dean Stanley's interesting remarks on the three Periods, each with its calamity: 1. The three years' famine; 2. The three months' rebellion; 3. The three days' pestilence; each typifying, in some measure, the hiding of the Light.

† As in the weregeld of the Teutonic races.

‡ Stakes with a transverse beam or spar—crosses in fact.

§ Michal is certainly a mis-reading.

(v. 15.) The rest of the chapter belongs likewise to the earlier Philistine warfare. It is interesting, as giving details unnoticed in the summarised account (Chap. v.). With the situations there described, the present names and exploits tally exactly, yet a later editor, not knowing the exact sequence, may have preferred leaving the record as it stands, without attempting to fix any date. The expressions in vv. 16, 22, need not involve relationship to Goliath, but only that all these were 'Rephaim,' sons of the giant-race.† (v. 19.)

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* *Vide* Turner's 'Rizpah the daughter of Aiah;' better still, his sketch in the 'Liber Studiorum.'

† Heb. 'Harapha.'

The man slain at Gob may be akin to David's foe, but 'Bethlehemite' seems a mis-reading of the Hebrew, 'Lahmi, brother of Goliath.'

(Chap. xxii.) This noble song is, of course, Psalm xviii., and belongs to the same period as the preceding chapter. It is a thanksgiving for victory over Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, Ammonites, and Edomites, and abounds in allusions to this varied and protracted conflict. (v. 47.) This is a beautiful allusion to the Living Rock, while v. 51 is distinctly Messianic. (Chap. xxiii.) In antithesis to the last, which must be one of the earliest triumph-songs of the single reign, we have here probably the last poetic prophecy of the sweet Psalmist of Israel. The buoyant exultation of the former tells of its early composition, but the latter comes from a chastened heart, after

> 'Sad success, parental tears, and a dreary gift of years!'

Earthly hopes are less predominant, but the harp is tuned to a higher key, a Messianic tone runs throughout. (v. 1.) We observe the prophetic style, like that of Balaam's opening (Num. xxiv. 3, 4). The descriptive epithets point to our Lord, the Son of Jesse—the man who was raised up on high;* the Anointed of the God of Israel—the singer whose† voice is most sweet. (v. 2.) David recognises his own divine commission; this is parallel with later prophecies of the Spirit and the Word. (v. 3.) The simile of the Rock once more; but personified and speaking as a king—declaring to His earthly delegate the duties of a king. (v. 4.) Those who have seen a cloudless tropical or Oriental dawn, and further have witnessed the renewal of the earth upon the first rain that falls after a water-famine, can alone take in the full exquisiteness of these two parables, both prophetic of the reign of Christ.‡ (v. 5.) This has been considered very obscure, but modern Hebraists seem to be right in giving the interrogatory form, which lessens the difficulty. David sees that his house has fallen short of the early promise, but still 'is not my house so with God? Has He not made with me an everlasting covenant? For all my salvation and all my desire, will He not make it grow?' etc. Thus he points from his earthly Zion to the city whose builder and maker is God.§ (v. 6.) Again, the thornbrakes, with their ivory spines seven and eight inches long which we see in hot countries, can alone show the vigour of this simile! The reign of the righteous king makes the tender grass clothe the earth; now the singer alludes to the dark and turbulent spirits which arise to mar the peace of the land, like the thorns which may not be touched save by the armed warrior, or removed except by fire.

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* *Vide* St. John xii. 32.

† Cant. v. 16.

‡ Rev. i. 16.

§ 'It is a prediction, but a prediction wrapt up in that undefined suspense, and that dependence on moral conditions, which so well distinguish the predictions of Sacred prophets from those of Pagan soothsayers.'—Stanley, Lect. xxiv.

David thinks of his own troubles: the sons of Zeruah, Shimei, Sheba—yes, Amnon too, and Absalom! Speaking as God's mouthpiece, his heart is heavy with the thought of possible 'thorns' in the earthly kingdom; such wicked ones must be swept away before there can be peace. So also said 'the Son' of His Kingdom: 'I am come to send fire upon the earth.'

(v. 8.) The list which follows should be compared with 1 Chron. xi. There the whole account seems fuller, as if carefully made out by a later hand. But here we have a roughly-kept record, evidently valued, and preserved as containing notices of exploits possibly jotted down by an eye-witness at the time of their occurrence.* The whole belongs to the earlier part of David's reign, and in Chronicles it is rightly placed about the time of his accession.

We gather then that David had a succession of 'mighty men,' who commanded the army in turn for a month at a time, Joab being commander-in-chief. They were all, possibly, taken from the brave comrades of his exile, gaps being filled when deaths occurred. According to his favourite three-fold division, he had a specially renowned band of thirty, and further, certain 'triads of heroes,' even mightier still, each one of these last having won distinction by some single-handed exploit. The Hebrew of this passage is imperfect; names have been altered and dropped out. But we can distinguish Jashobeam the Hachmonite, Dodo the Ahohite, and another,† it may be Benaiah, as the first triad. The two first joined at Ziklag, and possibly on Dodo's death his son replaced him, being named here with special honour for a single-handed rout of the Philistines (v. 9) when abandoned by his troop (v. 11). Another hero of certain value but doubtful name, Shammah, is believed to be David's brother, son not of Agee but of Jesse, 'Hararite' meaning a mountaineer. If so, he is the father of Jonathan the giant-slayer (xxi. 21). Then we have another 'triad.' (v. 13.) Only one of the names is given here, but, from the parallel account in Chronicles, besides Abishai there is Benaiah, and a third, possibly Asahel, whose death by Abner's hand left a blank in the 'second three.' The romantic and beautiful story told of them is in exact keeping with the wild and picturesque fidelity which distinguishes Abishai and the gazelle-like Asahel. The time is plainly that of David's stay 'in the hold'—the cave of Adullam. It was the fierce heat of harvest, and in the Valley of Giants lay the Philistine host, their garrison at Bethlehem itself. And the warrior's poet spirit turned to dream of his early home, his father's welling spring, his simple life in the wilderness, leading his flock by still waters. 'The three mighty men brake through the host;' they bring the clear water to slake their leader's thirst; but he, with the enthusiastic piety which meets us continually in the Psalms, refuses to drink 'the blood of these men,' and pours it out as an offering to the Lord. On this occasion, probably, Abishai withstands three hundred men. (v. 20.) Benaiah's exploits come next. Two lion-like men are perhaps 'sons of Ariel,' i.e. The Lion, a Moabite chief. This marks the date; it must have been in the Moabite war (Chap. viii.). This war may have lasted into 'the time of snow,' when wild beasts cause great panic in villages. The lion seems to have taken refuge in a well or tank, and been dislodged and killed, as also was the Egyptian of great stature, by this champion. (v. 24.) There follows a list of thirty-seven; many of the names have already figured in the history. Asahel heads it, and Uriah closes it—a proof that it was drawn up earlier than the events of which we have seen the close.

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* Very likely Gad.

† Adino the Eznite is one of these altered names; no such person seems to have existed.

(Chap. xxiv.) We return to the history of David's later years. The expressions here must be compared with 1 Chron. xxi.; there are different opinions as to the form of temptation and the sin itself. (v. 1.) The word 'again' takes us back to Chap. xxi. 14, the first public calamity, the rebellion was the second, this is the last. Some evil adviser may have prevailed with David, and the result seems to be the order to Joab to prepare for this census. No name is given, but it may have been a foreign ally. (v. 4.) Joab, and some at least of his companions in command, are wholly against the scheme, remonstrating almost in the words of Moses (Deut. i. 11). They know the measure will be unwise. The tribes have given signs of disaffection, on which Absalom had grounded his conspiracy. Benjamin and the children of Joseph still hanker after the house of Saul. In making the census, ill-feeling may easily awake again, and the inferior numbers of the actually loyal will be made manifest. 'Numbering' was in itself no sin, all depended on the motive. Of David's motives we must judge by inference. If the spirit were that of heathen kings, trusting to numbers for victory, that was out of harmony with his reliance on the Rock of Israel. But another possible motive suggests itself.* A tribute of a half shekel was given 'as a ransom' to the sanctuary by each adult male (Exod. xxx. 12). David was at this very time busied in amassing treasure for the building of the Temple. This may have been an expedient for raising a large sum. May not this be a lesson to ourselves? The expedients to which we resort in raising money for God's service—will they *all* bear His scrutiny? Once let the 'love of money, the root of all evil,' find its way into the sanctuary, and who can say what lowered motives, what marring of spiritual life, what stumbling-blocks for other souls, may not be furnished by those who call themselves workers for Him? If this were his object, David seems—according to Josephus—to have failed in it. Either Joab did not exact, or the people refused to pay, the tribute, entailing on themselves the punishment foretold by Moses. (v. 9.) The work seems to have taken over nine months, though Joab shortened it as much as possible. Levi was exempt, and he omits Ephraim, it may be from the unwillingness openly shown. In Chronicles we are expressly told that the results of this numbering were never entered in the national records.* (v. 10.) David's conscience speaks to him of his sin. Gad, the companion of his early years at Ramah, is the messenger both of punishment and of pardon. (v. 13.) The 'seven' is most likely three years—as in Chronicles—corresponding with the months and days. The choice is made in David's best spirit of perfect trust, and the judgment falls; it is the largest mortality on record ever produced by pestilence in Israel, diminishing the numbers in which the king exulted, and punishing the factious spirit which had resisted the tribute. But when the Angel of Death reaches Zion, God stays his hand. The old Jebusite possessors linger on on Moriah (the Vision of God), Araunah is a prince among them. Scared like Balaam by the angelic vision, he and his sons hide in a cave used for storing their wheat, hallowed to this day by Jew and Gentile. When they see a solemn procession advancing, David and his court clothed in sackcloth, Araunah comes forth and casts himself before the king. (v. 17.) David's words of intercession are for these—outside the covenant—that they may not be involved in Israel's punishment. As he and Araunah converse, we are again aware of one of these 'conjunctions' which testify to the Divine education of the ancient world. David speaks of his sacrifice, of his desire to buy the property for God's service, and Araunah as a king, gives all to the king, with words of blessing which sufficiently prove the goodness of his heart. David's answer contains the true spirit of all offering, in language applicable to all worship, till time shall be no longer, and Araunah yields with the generosity that will not stand in the way of another's offering.† God saw and accepted both. Again Jew and Gentile share in making an oblation, and the Lord is intreated, and the plague stayed from Israel. So, too, Jew and Gentile shall share in the great Restitution. Upon that very spot rose the Temple, the Sanctuary with its shrouding Veil. But the covering shall be rent from the face of all nations in the hour of perfect sacrifice, and the Victim slain, the teaching Prophet, the sacrificing Priest, the conquering King—He shall be the Son of David.

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* I am indebted to the Editor for this striking suggestion.

At this point, so full of pardon and prophetic hope, we close the Books of Samuel. They give scenes from Israel's history through the most momentous period of transition and settlement, and the fullest of Messianic prediction, of those Scriptures we are bidden by our Lord Himself to search. The lives of Samuel and David run through these Books like a silver cord. Reading and meditating upon them must surely bring home to us the bearing upon our Christian faith of these records of ancient Jewish history. In the varied types of character, the lives and acts preserved in these Books, we have—in the setting of their own times—specimens of our own nature at its best and its worst; but through the shadows we are ever pointed forward to the one desire and hope of all nations, the centre-point alike of human history and of Divine Revelation: The Incarnation of the Son of God.

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* The Heb. is full of numerical mistakes—omitted dots, etc. But one account probably includes the army, and the naturalised foreigners, while the other does not.

† For the 'price' *vide* 'Speaker's Commentary.'

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

Questions for June.

51. Describe the progress of events in the rebellion, from Chap. xv. 20 to its close.

52. Write a comment upon the character of Absalom, as displayed in his life.

53. Trace David's course in his flight and return, giving the relative positions of Jerusalem, Bahurim, Mahanaim, and Gilgal.

54. Give the counter statements of Ziba and Mephibosheth, and the king's replies.

55. Mark any indications you can of the rivalries between the different tribes.

56. 'It was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah had done.' Comment upon the story attached to these words.

57. Write a note upon the sons of Zeruiah and Abigail.

58. Compare and comment upon the two songs given in Chaps. xxii., xxiii.

59. 'Taken in thy mischief,' 'chafed in their minds,' 'draw it into the river,' 'hungry and weary and thirsty,' 'cometh with good tidings.' 'How long have I to live?' 'Ask counsel at Abel.' 'Until water dropped.' 'Two lion-like men.' 'Fenced with iron.' Place these phrases in the right connection.

60. Describe the census, its probable motives, and its consequences.

Answers to be sent, not later than July 2nd, to Miss L. Dundas, 37, Manor Place, Edinburgh. The writer's real name and address, as well as the *nom de plume*, to be clearly written on each sheet.

N.B.—Competitors are requested to abstain from writing remarks or requests on the margin of their MSS. When these are necessary, they must be sent by letter or post-card.

Class List for April.

First Class.

Bubbles	96	Greta	84	Penholder	80
Elphin	95	Lancelot	83	Daisy	79
Verena	93	Iza		Hypatia	77
Water Wagtail	90	Brown Bess	82	Lucilla	
Celestine	89	Winifred	81	Carlotta	76
Elpis	88	Firefly		Aconite	75
Breidden	84	Sparrow		Rose Marie	

Class II.

Ariel	74	Juno	69	Atalanta	68
Ina	73	Ellen		Lily	66

No papers from Moon, Gwen, Joiner, Lady Bettina, Excelsior, Shamrock, Spectacles, and Constantine.—Anonyma and Pyrethrum have explained their unavoidable delay.

DEBATABLE GROUND.

Is a strong sense of responsibility always advantageous to a character?

'Packing up the wedding presents, dear, are you? Well, I won't help you, and then if they are broken, it will be *your* fault.'

The lady who uttered this observation exemplified in a small way the evils of too strong a sense of responsibility. It caused her to be selfish and cowardly. Moreover, a good deal of saying, 'I told you so,' is caused not so much by the wish to triumph as by the wish to throw off personal responsibility.

The debates, however, are mostly in favour of the sense of responsibility. Chelsea China thinks that some of the papers confuse the sense of responsibility with having responsibilities, which is not quite the same thing. Several writers think its danger is to make people hard and interfering. Chelsea China is inclined to believe that it is more likely to make them timid. The dread of responsibility is often found in indulged and sheltered people, who have been at once spared and controlled. The fear, if not the sense, of responsibility is the shady side of contented deference to authority; the price paid for the happiness of a prolonged childhood; the defect perhaps of the quality of feminine reliance and submission.

That the fear of God is the only cure for the fear of man and the fear of consequences is of course the true answer to the question, and is well put by *Dame May* and others.

Papers received from *Dame May*, *Blackbird*, *A Northumbrian Lassie*, *Neddy Crow*, *Omnia Sperans*, *Sea Gull*, *Semibreve*, *Beta*, *Polly*, *Sunflower*, *Bildad*, and *Atheline*, given whole.

I think the whole matter depends very much on whether the 'sense of responsibility is merely a *personal* one, or whether it rises higher. The present generation are full of responsibility—a sort of responsibility which makes a great deal of fuss and noise. It is mostly the outcome of the great desire of each individual to leave a personal mark of some sort on the world, and, as far as it goes, is often an inspiration to an otherwise aimless character. But this sort of responsibility is really essentially 'of the earth earthy,' inasmuch as it always considers self first and God last. It is cramped and kept down by a certain fearfulness, but a fearfulness which is not 'the fear of God,' but the fear of man. We all know people who are thus filled with unknown scruples and fears; anxious, timid souls, who are apprehensive that their every action may be misunderstood, who explain and justify their very thoughts. Their whole life is an unsuccessful effort to justify themselves to themselves and to others. Difficulties and doubts and stumbling-blocks they can seldom or never surmount, for they have not the courage to stand alone, nor the patience to wait. So it follows, that when the fresh enthusiasm of youth has died away, such characters lose heart, and often irretrievably sink into mere wrecks of what they might have been—and that because 'they had no fear of God before their eyes.' The sense of responsibility to God, the responsibility of a creature, of one who fears nothing but sin, often grows very slowly; it is matured by love, but often only learnt through painful experience. A man who is learning this highest responsibility, talks very little about it, just because he is so impregnated and impressed by the great desire to fulfil God's destiny and life-plan for him; but he is not fearful of man, except when the fear of man means also the fear of displeasing God. He looks 'not down, but up,' and 'up to God.' Such a man is always a tremendous power in the society among which he moves; he often possesses an influence of which he is almost wholly unconscious. Probably the average individual more or less blends these two senses of responsibility which are seldom found in their pure state.

ATHELINE.

AGREEMENT OF OPINION IN FRIENDSHIP.

Chelsea China has preserved extracts from *Beta*, *Blackbird*, *Letter L.*, and *Double Daisy*, thinking that they throw fresh lights upon last month's papers.

All that is necessary to a sympathetic person is that their friends should be *fair* to their beliefs; to feel that a subject, about which one cares deeply, is tabooed in the presence of one's friends, because it is sure to lead to angry discussion or to sneers which cannot but be wounding, *must* be a bar to close and happy intercourse; but, this one point granted, I think the strongest friendship is possible between imaginative and sympathetic people who differ widely from each other. There is, however, one type of character, a type, I think, particularly common among English people, and especially among English women, to whom this attitude of 'agreeing to differ' is incompatible with anything like real friendship. These are people who have very deep and earnest beliefs on some points, beliefs which they feel to be bound up with all that is best in themselves, and which therefore they conclude to be indissolubly bound up with all that is good in human nature. They seldom, however, discuss these beliefs, for to this sort of person nothing is more distasteful than the discussion of abstract subjects, so that they never get to see why it is that others differ from them, or to make allowance for what they consider their blindness. At the same time they are generally too simple and uncritical to find out that to some who profess the same opinions as themselves, the latter are not real convictions at all, but simply 'clothes,' as Carlyle would say, that may be changed with any change of weather, thus to them, the one essential is that their friends should wear, so to speak, the uniform of their regiment. Any one wearing that is a brother, whose faults and failings they do not care to point out to others, hardly even to acknowledge to themselves, all others are more or less 'suspect,' shut out, not indeed from good offices and kindly feeling, but from the intimate companionship of choice.

BLACKBIRD.

The 'rift' *need* not 'make the music mute.' But it will do so, unless on both sides there is sympathy enough to see the other's standpoint, and a firm conviction that truth is greater than the fraction of it which any individual, or the human race at large, can grasp. Under these conditions love and esteem will be safe, but the comfort of the friendship will be less than where there is more complete accord. It is harder to go on loving when community of interest is more or less impossible, especially for women, for our lives are much made up of small things, and we sometimes let these blind us to the principles which underlie them. But if we can rise above these difficulties we shall gain in power and breadth of sympathy, and a real friendship will be worth the effort, even though its full enjoyment may have to wait till 'all things that are dark shall be made clear.'

DOUBLE DAISY.

If we refuse to countenance any close friendship without agreement of belief and opinion, does it not seem rather as if we considered ourselves so very superior, and were afraid we might stain our spotless character by such doubtful intercourse? Such ideas tend in no slight degree to narrowness and uncharitableness, and are apt to contract our view of life, by always making our opinions run in the same groove. It would also prevent that healthy contact with minds of an entirely different type to our own, which contact is so beneficial ever and anon, in clearing and rearranging our preconceived notions.

We are surely right in looking upon friendship as one of the chief factors in forming and moulding the character. What a much wider sphere of thought is opened by the broader views true friendship is calculated to confer. How often that which is lacking in one character, is supplied by intercourse with another character, may be of totally divergent views to the first mentioned. The poet certainly expresses our thoughts in the following words—

'And he supplied my want the more,
As his unlikeness fitted mine.'

BETA.

What if the differences that so often seem to divide us were just caused by the growth of some new truth which we do not yet understand, or which we are looking at from different sides? Some new light may have come to us which our friends cannot see, and which they mistrust and dislike—then we feel impatient at what seems like slowness of comprehension and narrowness, and they are grieved and anxious lest we are following false lights, adopting opinions which seem to them wrong and dangerous.

What are we to do? Break off the friendship because we can no longer agree? I think not. Rather let us look deeper and see if underneath the difference we are not still one in the Truth. Do not let us take it for granted that because one is right the other must be wrong, but remember the fable of the two knights and the shield, and try to see round the corner, and find out how it looks to those on the other side.

For Truth is a great circle, of which one half is in heaven, and even the other half is so great that we cannot see more than a little bit of it at a time. Therefore it needs many minds to see it all round.

THE LETTER L.

QUESTION FOR JUNE.

Are elaborate musical and otherwise ornamental religious services condusive to devotion?

Answers to be sent to Chelsea China, care of the Publishers, before July 1st.

CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY.

ICONOCLASTS.

Questions for June.

21. What reasons were urged for the abolition and what for the retention of Images or Eikons in churches, and what great doctrine did their upholders feel themselves to be defending?

22. Give a short historical account of the Iconoclastic struggle.

23. What were the decisions on this point of the Councils of Constantinople, 754; Nicæa, 787; Frankfort, 794; and what is commemorated by the Eastern Church on 'Orthodoxy Sunday?'

24. Name some of the chief defenders of Eikons, with an account of either St. John of Damascus or St. Theodore of the Studium.

Answers to be sent to Bog-Oak, care of the Publishers, by July 1st.

Extra work recommended, Dr. Neale's '*Hymns of the Eastern Church*' (Hayes).

March Class List.

First Class.

Cocksmoor	37	Etheldreda	35	Papaver	33
Kentigern	36	Water Wagtail		Sycorax	
Firenze		Dubritia		Ierne	
Polypodium		Δαμβδα	34	Sophy	30

Second Class.

Charissa	29	White Owl	25	Honeysuckle	23
Bluebell		Violets		Malacoda	21
Verena	27	Antigone		Καθολικος	
Fidelia		Hegesippus	24	Ina	
Andromache	26	Decima	23	Trudel	20
Felix		Veritas		Spider	
Vorwärts		Countess			
King Cole		Scholastica			

Third Class.

March	19	Cecilia	18	Esclairmonde	10

REMARKS.

9. No one need be discouraged by low marks this month. The subject is difficult, and on the outskirts of Church History.

Mahomet's life best done by *Cocksmoor*, *Polypodium*, and Λαμβδα. It is now thought his personal poverty was owing to his being poor, not to his uncles' depriving him of anything. He began life with as many (or as few) possessions as his father. *Verena*: 609 was the date of his first announcement of his mission. His open preaching began 613. His wives, we fear, numbered eleven at least. Every Moslem may have four, and great valour is now rewarded by permission to take seven! *Decima* thinks thirty wives were allowed, and that Ali was Mahomet's child. He was his cousin, and the Hegira was the Flight itself—not the place he fled to, which was Medina. Many papers, after a lengthy and fabulous account of his early life, omit some or even all of the following important details: Battle of Bedr (623), Conquest of Arabian Jews (623–627), Submission of Mecca (630), Conquest of Arabia (629–632).

10. *Water Wagtail* and *Felix* have been most comprehending about the good and bad of Islâm. *Verena* has not seen the bearing of the question. The *main* good of Islâm is its uncompromising proclamation of the Unity of God—its anti-idolatry. But hardly any one has noticed that though Mahometans delight in saying, 'We all believe in the same God,' they really do not. 'One God' is not necessarily the true God, and 'he who hath not the Son, hath not the Father.' They who deny the second and third Persons of the Blessed Trinity deny the Father *as such;* and so worship a God of their own imagination, whose attributes moreover are not those of the Almighty, Whose Name is Love. *Fidelia:* Sad to say, Mahometans are harder far to convert than heathen. Islâm has never led man to Christ as the Greek philosophies did. *Etheldreda* sees hardly any good to Christendom from the Moslem; but the sweeping away of many heresies, and the purification of a remnant, have unconsciously worked good. Where a Church arose again, as in Spain, this purification lasted for centuries. The Church had failed to sweep away the atrocious heathen worship of North Africa, and this was now done thoroughly. Bog-Oak agrees with her in thinking little of civilisation. The Semitic Moslem is civilised, because capable of it. The Hamitic Moslem is as low a creature as before. That, at least, is her experience. It is curious how few have noticed the grievous destruction of early Christian literature. Even if it be true that much, supposed to be burnt, is really hidden in Eastern libraries, it has been as useless to literature in general as buried treasure.

11. *Firenze*, *Polypodium*, and *Antigone* work out the doom of the seven Churches of Asia, but of course this was not accomplished till the fourteenth century, though they now began to be the battle-field between the Eastern Empire and Islâm. *Papaver*, *Sycorax*, *Verena*, etc.: The Prophecy of the Locusts in Rev. ix. is the most striking of all, and is worked out fully in Isaac Williams' 'Apocalypse,' and in most commentaries. And next to this, the prophecies about Ishmael. *Sycorax:* Amrou's invasion of Egypt was in 638, not 658. Bog-Oak does not see how *Fidelia* makes out that the light of the candlestick of Africa shone in Britain. Why Britain especially?

12. Some do not mention that the Kaabah is the Kebla, or point towards which Moslems pray. In each Mosque is a niche in the wall

towards Mecca. If the direction of the wall does not quite correspond, an angle in the niche points the exact direction. *Papaver* and others: The Black Stone—Hajar el Aswad—is said to have fallen from Heaven, and it probably did. Burton described it as probably an aerolite or siderolite, and Partsch, Curator of Minerals at Vienna, was satisfied that it was such. Of course, a closer analysis than is possible now would be needed to prove this, but several similar meteorites were adored in the East. *Sophy* and *Andromache:* The Kaabah is not the Stone, but is the Sanctuary within the Mosque at Mecca, in whose outer wall the Black Stone is placed. Λαμβδα asks the real date of the Kaabah. It is almost certainly older than Christianity, but beyond this all is fable. The sacred stone, if an aerolite, may have been wandering in space from the Creation till it fell. *Water Wagtail, Charissa, Decima,* and others: Every Mahometan year begins eleven days *sooner*, not later, than the last. Thus the 1st of Mŭharram last year was August 28th; this year August 17th. Some speak as if the eleven defective days in each year were left somewhere tumbling about till they are gathered up and formed into 'an intercalary year' every thirty-three years. But each eleven days has been reckoned into the beginning of a fresh year, and Mahometans never intercalate one. They have too many years as it is. *We* have to add a year every thirty-third year of our era, to make *our* years correspond with those of the Hegira. Thus, *we* should call 1890, 1268 and 1269 since 622. But *they* consider it the year 1307–8 of the Hegira. Ramadan is obligatory on women; for though a mother nursing an infant is exempt, she must keep it later on. It is a mistake to think Mahometans evade this fast. If only Christians kept Lent half as well, one would be thankful. Bog-Oak has seen it strictly kept in a hot climate. The men work as usual, with less vigour, no doubt, and nothing tempts them to quench their thirst. They only break their fast when they can no longer distinguish a white thread from a black. Then usually comes a light meal at once, and a heavier one about midnight. After which they sleep, and often take nothing more. Doubtless they *may* feast at night, but practically a severe fast is observed, and the first sight of the moon of Shawall is hailed with rapture.

One member says the Korân teaches the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. This is a not uncommon mistake. There is no allusion to it. 'Oh, Mary, verily hath God chosen thee, *and purified thee*, and chosen thee above the women of the worlds.' I suppose most of us believe she was purified at some time before the Incarnation—so as to be *made* immaculate, and this belief absolutely contradicts the doctrine of her Immaculate Conception.

Notices to Correspondents.

Will some friend send me the words of the poem, the refrain of each verse ending with something about 'The gread God Pan, as he rests in the reeds by the river.' THE MUFFIN-MAN.

F. A. D. F. would be glad if any of the readers of the 'Monthly Packet' could give him the names of the authors of the undermentioned tales, viz.: 'Bosworth Field,' 'King's Secret,' 'Francesca Carrara,' 'Moss Troopers,' 'Lochiel, or the Field of Culloden,' and 'Otterbourne,' a story of the English Marshes.

D. C.—Write to Mademoiselle de La Vergne, 39, Rue Esprémenil, Havre. ED.

THE LILY (S. AGNES) MISSION.

ON the outskirts of North Kensington lies a small district, peopled with the poorest of the poor.

Two papers, headed 'Soap-suds,' described in the *Monthly Packet* some years ago, the starting of a Mission, called 'the Lily,' amongst its rough girls.

Few, unless they have seen, can realise the wildness of these girls.

The industries of the place are laundry work and professional begging; almost every house, which is not a common lodging-house, is a small laundry, employing from one to thirty hands. The working hours vary, but in many cases last from 7 A.M. to 9 or 10 at night. The heat, steam, and practice of partly paying in beer, produces a frightful amount of drunkenness; neither can it be wondered at, that the girls prefer of an evening the warm brilliancy of the public house and the company of their young men to beginning virtuously to clean a dark empty room after a hard day's work.

The children lie in the gutter when not at school. The beggars are the hardest to deal with, for they send their tiny children miles, ill-fed, and worse clothed, so that they may be the more piteous, and brutally ill-treat them if they do not bring home enough money.

In one of the huge Board Schools near, the infant school teachers bought biscuits out of their own pockets because 'their babies came with only a raw potatoe to eat for their breakfasts.' Here the Lily Mission Coffee Shop was opened, and has now developed into the S. Agnes Mission, under the London Diocesan Deaconesses.

The shop faces the worst street in the neighbourhood. It is served mainly by ladies working under the Sisters. Here milk breakfasts are given away to delicate starving mites, and children's halfpenny dinners sold by ticket, as many sometimes as two hundred a day, which are all over before the laundry women's dinner hour, when the latter can get a hot meal in quiet for a few pence. Above the shop is the large Girls' Club Room, where are held Elder and Junior Clubs nightly, Mothers' Meetings twice a week, Sunday Night Magic-lantern Mission Services, beside Sunday Schools and Classes. There is a School for definite religious Church teaching for Board School children on Saturday afternoons. It numbers over seventy ragged, eager, and wonderfully regular little scholars, and has a Guild of Holy Childhood to help the most earnest among them.

Adjoining is the Mission House, where girls can get a bed for fourpence a night, and where the Sisters lie, and next the Mission Women's Cottage, the whole making two-thirds of a square.

These buildings are freehold, have been adapted to their present use at considerable expense; that has all been met, there is not a penny of debt upon the place, but to work it we need £200 a year, and we have not got it, besides an extra £100 to pay for children rescued and sent to Industrial Homes or into the country.

This includes a great deal of outside work, great Bank Holiday entertainments, which, beginning with tea at 4 o'clock in S. Agnes Room for the girls, go on till past midnight in the Church Schools. Three hundred men, women, and children are admitted to these quarterly, endless smaller entertainments, reading aloud in the laundries, and other work impossible to describe, such as is carried on in all Missions. Our 'Shop' pays for itself, but it cannot produce a profit without 'the tricks of the trade.'

Will any one help us? We should be very grateful, for we are very poor, and would gladly show the premises any day, but Sundays or Mondays, to any friends who would like to see them.

Subscriptions, donations, gifts of clothes, old and new, will be thankfully received by The Sister in Charge, S. Agnes House, 50, Latymer Road, Notting Hill, W., London.

I suppose few people know anything of such a place as Ryhope, although it ranks as the second largest colliery in England! The population consists of 7000 people. These are pitmen and their families, with few exception; the clergy, my colleague and myself—the two Church workers.

Perhaps some short account of our work may not be uninteresting. It is difficult to write about, as it sounds so monotonous; yet it is not so in reality, owing to the infinite variety of character with which we come in daily contact.

We have no district visitors. The entire work of the parish, therefore, devolves upon the Vicar, two curates, and the two Church workers. Our sick-list is always a large one, owing to the overcrowding and bad drainage. We have no means with which to help the sick and needy. The offertories only just cover the Church expenses, leaving no margin for anything else.

A good deal of nursing necessarily devolves upon us, for which, of course, we need materials. Accidents in the pit are frequent, owing to the fall of stones from time to time, and we are consulted on every occasion by the friends of the sick.

We have so far been supplied with materials, funds, etc., by the kindness of private friends, but I think there must be many willing to help us if they did but know of and realise our pressing needs.

Gifts of money, food, clothes (new or old), books that you have done with, or outgrown flowers, fruit, in fact, almost everything that you could send, would be useful to us.

Kindly send contributions to Miss Dawson, the Mission House, Ryhope, near Sunderland. I will gladly give further particulars to any one requesting such.

The need of a 'Home for Incurables,' especially for ladies of small means, has for some time been widely felt: to supply this want, to a very limited extent, it is proposed to open one, on a small scale, in connection with the Convalescent Home at Hale, near Farnham.

An offer has been made of a suitable building, rent-free; also the services of an experienced lady as Matron; funds, however, are urgently needed for the purchase of bedding, linen, furniture, etc. The first cost of a bed, complete, it may be mentioned, is about £4 4*s.*

The payments required from the Inmates will vary, according to circumstances; no one, however, can be admitted at a lower *inclusive* rate than 8*s.* per week.

By this arrangement it is hoped that when the preliminary expenditure has been provided for, the institution may prove almost self-supporting; your generous aid is asked therefore, to enable the promoters to commence in earnest a work which will afford *some* relief at least, to a very prevalent class of suffering, the means of alleviating which are painfully inadequate.

Contributions, however small, of money, linen, suitable furniture, etc., will be thankfully received by Miss Amy Mangles, The Convalescent Home, Hale, Farnham, Surrey.

'Nazareth' Home of Rest, New House Farm, Tandridge, Godstone, Surrey.—This Home has been recently opened for men and their wives, either together or separately. A mother may take one child under five years of age. Terms:—Men (per week) 9*s.*; women, 8*s.*; children according to age.

Return tickets from London Bridge to Godstone can be obtained by those who are going to the Home at the reduced fare of 2*s.* 8*d.* each.

The Home is about a mile and a quarter from Godstone station, and arrangements can be made for any who cannot walk this distance.

Parcels can be brought every evening by the farm cart.

All applications to be made to Sister Jane Frances, S. Saviour's Priory, Gt. Cambridge Street, Hackney Road, E.

Any contributions will be most thankfully received by her, either at the above address, or at the Home of Rest.

Gifts of fruit and vegetables will be very acceptable at the Home.

Some old garden seats, a set of croquet, bowls, or games of any kind are very much wanted. Address, Sister Jane Frances, Tandridge, Godstone.

Inmates will be gladly received from *any part of London.*

NOV 15 1916